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ABSTRACT

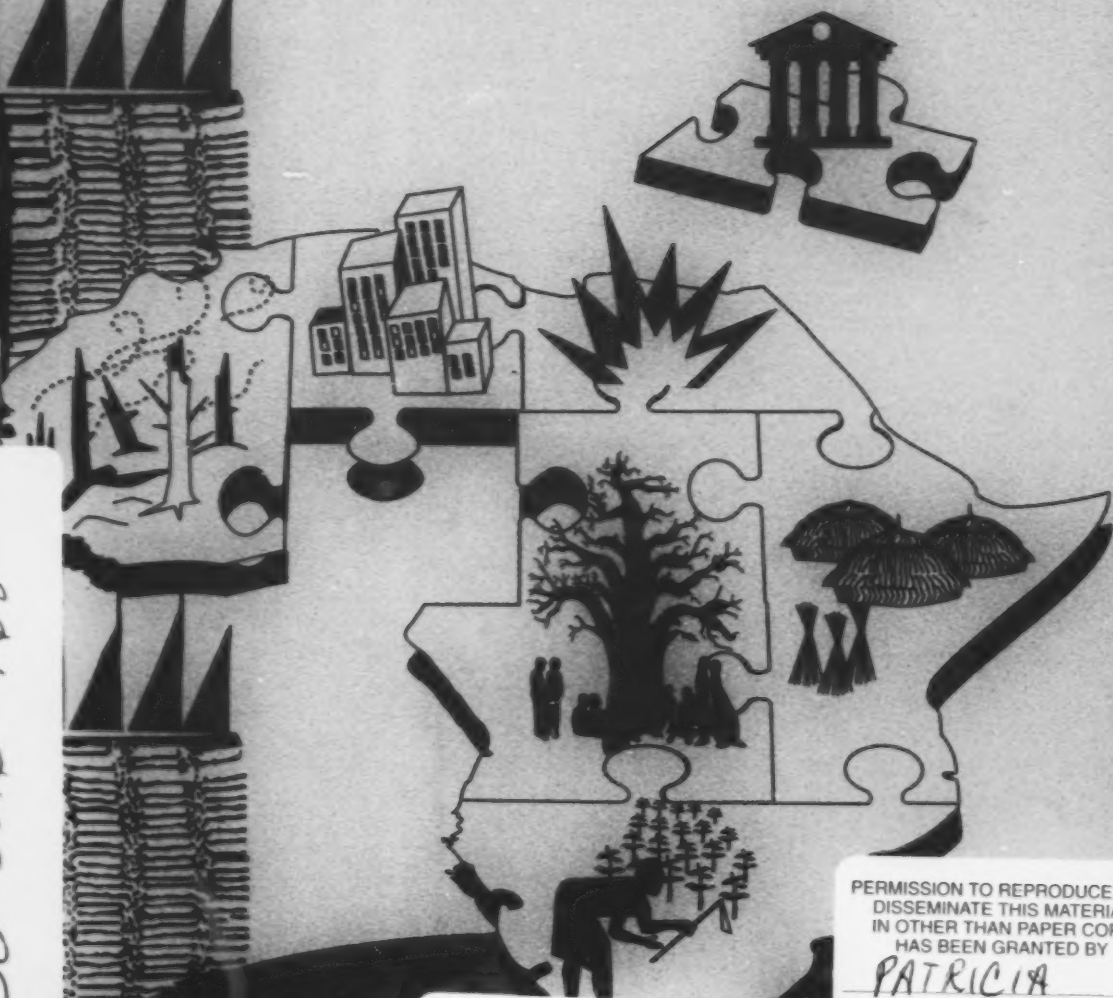
This unit uses six activities to examine questions of world hunger as seen in an African context and the related policy issues. Each activity allows students to explore a case study demonstrating a factor that affects hunger and grapple with some of the challenges facing policymakers today. Students should come to understand the nature of hunger, its distribution in the world, and the complex factors creating conditions for hunger. The lessons include: (1) "How Does Conflict Affect Hunger?"; (2) "Hunger and Local Communities"; (3) "Hunger and Government Policies"; (4) "What Is the Relationship between the Natural Environment and Hunger?"; (5) "How Do Population Growth and Hunger Relate?"; (6) "How Do Foreign Aid and Structural Adjustment Policies Affect Hunger?"; and (7) "The Web of Hunger." A 24-item list of references conclude the document. (EH)

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Why is there Hunger in Africa? Nature Pleads Not Guilty

SO 026 768



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WHY IS THERE HUNGER IN AFRICA? NATURE PLEADS "NOT GUILTY"

A Curriculum Unit for Science and Social Studies
Grades 7-12

Developed by Jane Boston and Stephen Commins
Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE)
Institute for International Studies

in cooperation with the

California International Studies Project
Stanford University School of Education

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Unit Introduction

WHY IS THERE HUNGER IN AFRICA? NATURE PLEADS NOT GUILTY

Rationale

For many people in the world, food seems to be constantly at hand. Through television and magazine advertisements, the mushrooming of fast food outlets, and the sheer size of supermarkets, food appears to be an overwhelming presence in Western Europe, much of North America, and parts of Asia. In much of the "developed" world, when there is hunger, it is most likely a result of poverty, not a lack of food. However, in many parts of the developing world, the absence of food is as visible as the presence of food is elsewhere. It is clear that hunger remains a persistent problem throughout the world.

During the 1980s, famines in such countries as Ethiopia, the Sudan, and Mozambique provided the world with stark images of widespread hunger and human misery in many parts of the African continent. Although hunger is often associated with the African continent, issues of food security face many parts of the world. The case study in this unit focuses on Africa and issues related to hunger facing the entire continent. However, it is important to remind your students that there are enormous disparities within African countries as well as between countries regarding the actual situation of food production and food availability.

Rarely have problems related to hunger been identified by the media and government officials as being connected with the underlying economic, political, and environmental difficulties affecting food production and food security. Due in part to the images presented to the casual observer, famine and drought seem so closely related that one recent collection of essays on the Sahelian (West African) famines of the 1970s was entitled *Nature Pleads Not Guilty*. In their study of hunger in Africa, development practitioners and academics often reflect the perspective of their particular discipline, rather than using a complex, interactive model of the causes of hunger. This leads to the emphasis on one particular problem, such as drought, failures of African governments, or foreign aid.

In the post-Cold War era, the problems of Africa seem to have increased, even as international attention has shifted to the Republic of Russia, China, and the booming economies of East Asia. Wars and famines in Somalia, Angola, and Ethiopia make it appear as if Africa is a continent that is unable to feed itself, and that food shortages will chronically haunt the continent. Yet, beneath these appearances are a web of connections that can help illuminate the reasons why hunger and food shortages seem to be a constant and continual threat.

The issues related to hunger can be addressed only through an appreciation of diverse and sometimes seemingly contradictory factors. Hunger in Africa is the result of widespread failures in the food producing sectors in many countries. These are not short-term problems. When students look at either chronic food shortages or famine situations,

unit introduction

they need to be able to bring interpretive questions that allow them to go beyond the apparently simple causes or solutions. This unit allows students to explore the debates regarding food shortages in sub-Saharan Africa and to consider alternative approaches to creating food security on the continent.

Why Is There Hunger in Africa? Nature Pleads Not Guilty uses six activities to look at some of the questions about world hunger as seen in an African context and their related policy issues. Each activity allows students to explore a case study that demonstrates a factor affecting hunger and to grapple with some of the challenges this issue causes policymakers to face. Through the orientation activity and the six focused activities, students will develop an understanding of the nature of hunger, its distribution in the world, and the complex factors that create the conditions for hunger. The resources for this unit were chosen because they illustrate significant issues and provide an array of perspectives on the topic.

Why Is There Hunger in Africa? Nature Pleads Not Guilty offers an introduction to a complex and sometimes contentious subject. It does not attempt to provide illustrations of all facets of hunger nor does it attempt to explore all the relevant questions. The cases do offer the opportunity for students to be involved in a wide range of issues. In each activity, students will explore a particular factor that affects hunger while they learn about the challenges of policymaking. Although African examples are used as a case study for this unit, we recognize that hunger is a world-wide phenomenon and encourage teachers to help students put this information into the broader international context.

Unit Goals

- to expand students' knowledge and understanding of some of the factors creating world hunger
- to promote an understanding of some of the options and issues involved when making decisions about hunger
- to make connections between the students' own experiences with hunger and the unit

Unit Framework

This unit is designed primarily for teachers teaching contemporary world issues, geography, world history, or environmental studies, Grades 7-12. These activities might be used as part of a more extensive study of global environmental issues and/or sustainable development.

Group Work

The pedagogical design of *Why Is There Hunger in Africa? Nature Pleads Not Guilty* is based on many years of research in the Stanford School of Education by Dr. Elizabeth Cohen, and more recently by Dr. Rachel Lotan, on how to increase student access to learning through group work. This research by the Program for Complex Instruction led to the development of a teaching approach and a model for curriculum materials. The teaching approach itself is a complex one and involves intensive staff development for full implementation. These materials are not designed to introduce that approach to the novice. They do, however, fit the model for curriculum materials and may be useful to teachers using the complex instruction approach. It is our hope that material

unit introduction

developed in this way will also be useful to teachers using other cooperative, small group teaching strategies.

Group work units contain six to eight activities organized around a big idea, central question, or major concept of a discipline. Students rotate through a series of group activities designed to stimulate thinking and discussion about the big idea. When students report the results of their investigations, the teacher needs to ask questions that probe the students' understanding, make connections among the different activities, and address the fundamental content of the unit.

At the heart of these curriculum materials are resource materials that draw heavily on primary sources and provide students with greater access to the academic content of the unit. When students examine photographs or listen to tapes in addition to textual material, they have increased access to the learning task. Even students who cannot read at grade level will participate more.

Each activity includes a group project that is multidimensional and encourages the use of multimedia. These projects give more students the opportunity to contribute to the success of the group and to demonstrate and be recognized for their own competence and understanding of the content. Increased participation is related to increased learning. These materials combine a group project, which reinforces the students' interdependence, and an individual report, which holds students individually accountable.

An important feature of this curriculum model is the open-ended nature of the questions. Most questions do not have one right or wrong answer, and the group products also depend on the group's decision. This design feature contributes to the development of higher-order thinking skills.

In *Why Is There Hunger in Africa? Nature Pleads Not Guilty*, students begin with an *Orientation Activity* in which they identify and define the concept of world hunger and explore background information that will help them study it in an African context. At the core of the unit are six activities that specifically address the big idea by focusing on seven different factors that may contribute to hunger or lack thereof. Each activity includes a section for the teacher with background on the issue and the specific factor. Also included are extension questions to assist the teacher in debriefing student presentations and a list of related issues to serve as further research or discussion items. Each activity also includes a set of cards for the students: an *Activity Card*, which includes background information, open-ended questions, and an interdependent task the group must complete; a set of *Resource Cards*, which are needed to complete the task; and an *Individual Report*, which serves to reinforce individual, as well as group, accountability and to give the teacher a measure of the student's understanding of the big idea.

At the end of the unit is the *Closing Activity* in which students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of world hunger by first creating a hunger web, and then exploring options for alleviating hunger at home and in the world.

unit introduction

Multiple Abilities

In order to ensure access to learning, multiple ability tasks are incorporated into each of the activities. The following is a list of some of the multiple abilities that the students will need to complete the various activities in this unit:

- Linguistic abilities
 - understanding how a text fits into the big picture
 - translating the message of the text into another form
 - identifying the main point of the text
 - identifying multiple points of view
 - explaining ideas clearly
- Visual abilities
 - grasping the message of a picture
 - recognizing and using symbols
 - noting details in pictures
 - interpreting political cartoons
 - translating ideas into visual forms
 - interpreting graphs and charts
- Spatial abilities
 - interpreting schematic plans
 - translating ideas into layouts and schematic designs
 - translating ideas into three-dimensional models
- Interpersonal abilities
 - listening to and interpreting the ideas of others
 - clarifying perspectives and points of view
 - asking for help when needed
 - recognizing when help is needed by others and providing appropriate assistance
 - sharing resources and tools with others
 - working with others to complete a task
- Dramatic abilities
 - creating a dramatic sequence
 - expressing feelings, messages, and situations through acting

Reference Materials

- Cohen, Elizabeth G. *Designing Groupwork: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom*, rev. ed. New York: Teachers College Press, 1994 .
- Harden, Blaine. *Africa: Dispatches from a Fragile Continent*. New York: Norton Press, 1990.
- Martin, Phillis, and Patrick O'Meara, eds. *Africa*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1977.

unit introduction

Icons For easier references the following icons are used throughout the unit:



Group Work



Background Information

PREPARING FOR GROUP ACTIVITIES

Structure

The Complex Instruction model is based on the idea that true understanding of a concept comes only through working with that concept repeatedly. Ideally each group should have the opportunity to experience each activity—in this case the students go through six "rounds." At least two or three rounds of activities are recommended. The chart below demonstrates how all the groups could experience six rounds.

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5	Activity 6
Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5	Activity 6	Activity 1
Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5	Activity 6	Activity 1	Activity 2
Activity 4	Activity 5	Activity 6	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
Activity 5	Activity 6	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4
Activity 6	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5

Roles

Many teachers find that assigning roles to each member of the group encourages full participation. The following roles have been found effective:

- **Facilitator:** makes sure everyone understands the instructions; ensures that all the group members participate; calls the teacher if no one in the group knows the answer; and makes sure that all members of the group get the help they need.
- **Recorder:** makes sure group has notes from the discussion and ensures that everyone completes an individual report.
- **Materials Manager:** collects whatever materials are needed to complete the task.
- **Harmonizer:** makes sure communication lines are open, and makes sure there are no "put downs."
- **Reporter:** organizes the group's report to the class; discusses with the group what will be reported; and summarizes the activity to introduce the report to the class.

teacher preparation

Time and Suggested Sequence of Activities

The following sequence and suggested time is recommended for the activities:

ACTIVITY	SUGGESTED TIME
• Orientation Activity	1-1/2 to 3 hours
• Activities 1 through 6	1 activity per lesson
-Group work: (reading the cards and answering the questions)	30 minutes
-Preparing presentation	10 minutes
-Presentations	10 minutes per group
Closing Activity	1-1/2- to 3 hours plus outside research time

Materials and Equipment

- Butcher paper
- Strips of colored paper
- World map (disposable or laminated if possible)
- Map of Africa
- Push pins or colored self-adhesive dots
- Card stock
- Felt pens
- Old magazines, yarn, and other scrap materials (alternative: modeling clay)

Teacher Preparation

1. Each activity includes a set of cards for the students. We encourage you to print these on heavy stock paper and on different colors. For example, the Activity Cards might be green and the Resource Cards white. It is advisable to laminate the Activity and Resource Cards so that they can be reused. Another option is to insert them in plastic sleeves.
2. If the classroom equipment allows, each group should have its own table. The cards and any equipment they will need should be on each table before the students get started.
3. Maintain a section of the classroom with materials for the students to complete their group tasks. This section should be designated so that the Materials Managers know where they can go to obtain supplies for their groups.
4. Use a stopwatch or a simple kitchen timer to keep track of time for each segment of the activity.

teacher preparation

Optional Activities

- If possible, videotape, record, or photograph the various groups' performances and presentations.
- Have newsprint available for students to record any questions or comments they may have about world hunger and related issues.

Orientation Activities

PART I: HUNGER IN A WORLD FULL OF FOOD

- Overview** The purpose of this Orientation Activity is to acquaint students with the concept of hunger and how it manifests itself throughout the world.
- Objectives**
- to define hunger
 - to discuss manifestations of hunger throughout the world
- Time** One class period
- Suggested Procedure**
1. Create a space on your classroom wall to serve as an interactive bulletin board during this unit. If possible, include a world map and plenty of space to add students' work as they investigate the topic of hunger. In the center of the student display space, place a 4-by-8 inch card or other piece of paper with the word *hunger* written on it.

It is important to be sensitive to the possibility that some students in your classroom may themselves be hungry or know someone for whom hunger is a real issue.
 2. Begin by asking students to share what they know about hunger. You may want to ask them to collect articles from the media related to hunger in advance of the unit. If you are using electronic resources such as the Internet, you may want to ask them to do a search using the key words *hunger* or *food security*. Ask students to work in pairs to identify the places in the world where there is persistent hunger. When they have finished, ask them to share their responses with the class. You may want to have them place pins or stickers on the map or a globe to mark the places they have identified.
 3. Ask the students how they learned about hunger in these places. Conduct a brief discussion about how we learn about world hunger. You might explore such issues as advocacy, stereotypical images, partial or incomplete information, or world areas that are not covered consistently by the popular press.
 4. Ask the students to continue working in pairs and to identify as many causes of hunger as they can. Ask them to write their responses on strips of colored paper and attach them around the word *hunger* on the bulletin board. When they have finished, debrief the activity by asking them to look for possible connections among the causes they have listed. You will need to save these responses until the final activity of the unit.

orientation activity: part I

5. Using the Teacher Reference Notes and Transparencies 1-3, give the students a brief overview of world hunger and the production and availability of food.
6. Distribute Handout 1, Overview of World Hunger, and ask students to read it. Depending on time available, this reading can be used in class or as a homework assignment. Debrief the reading by asking students to add anything they have learned from the handout to the interactive bulletin board by adding or subtracting locations on the world map or listing additional causes of hunger.
7. Distribute Handout 2, Key Words. Ask students to use it as a reference throughout the unit and to add additional words to the list as needed. You may want to ask students to maintain a working portfolio, journal, or folder for the unit.
8. Conclude this activity by asking students to complete a five-minute free write on the topic of hunger.

TEACHER REFERENCE NOTES

HUNGER AND FOOD SECURITY

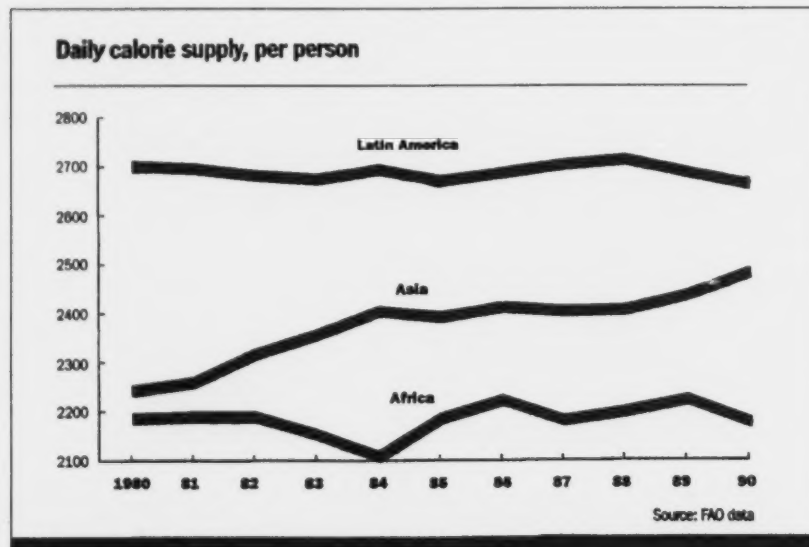
- During the time period between 1974 and 1994, the world has had more than adequate food supplies for everyone to enjoy a minimally adequate diet (2350 calories per person per day).
- During that same time period, the number and proportion of chronically undernourished people in the developing world has fallen significantly. The proportion of undernourished people dropped from 36 percent in 1970 to 20 percent in 1990.
- Global food supplies are not evenly distributed, and nearly 800 million people remained undernourished in 1990, the last year for which complete information is available.
- At least two billion people faced vitamin and mineral deficiencies that posed serious health threats. These deficiencies are a less obvious form of malnutrition, but can cause blindness, anemia, and even death.
- Seventy percent of the world's hungry people live in the Asia-Pacific region, but both the number and proportion of hungry people has fallen there since 1970 in spite of a rapidly growing population.
- The absolute number and percentage of hungry people in sub-Saharan Africa has increased. During the period between 1970 and 1990, the percentage of the population that was undernourished increased from 35 percent to 37 percent. Hunger is widespread and getting worse in sub-Saharan Africa. Long-term economic decline, international debt, low commodity prices, poor results from the structural adjustment policies supported by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and civil strife all contributed to growing poverty and hunger in Africa. Almost one-third of African children under age five are undernourished and one-fifth of African women of child-bearing age are underweight and likely to be malnourished.
- Poor economic conditions during the 1980s led to increasing hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean. Income inequality in the region is a long-standing cause of hunger. Hunger is usually worse in rural areas and especially among indigenous people.
- Hunger has declined substantially in the Middle East, but 12 million people there remain undernourished.
- Though many people are likely to think of famine when they hear the word *hunger*, famine actually affects relatively few people, and the amount of food needed to prevent it is relatively small. Famines can be caused by drought and other natural catastrophes, such as floods and earthquakes, or by human actions such as war, civil conflict, and the use of food as a weapon. Experts at Brown University estimated that in 1992, 157 million people (3 percent of the world's population) lived in countries affected by famine or food shortage (though not everyone in these countries actually suffered from hunger).
- In the industrial world, economic changes have reduced wages among low-skill workers. Governments face political and financial constraints on their ability to fund social welfare programs. These trends have contributed to growing food insecurity. In the United States, many low-income people find that they do not have enough food. Hunger is often cyclical, often appearing during the last week of the month when food stamps, paychecks, and other benefits run out. Unbalanced diets are also a problem. However, hunger in wealthy nations is neither as severe nor as widespread as in developing countries.

adapted from Marc J. Cohen, ed., *Hunger 1995: Causes of Hunger*, (Silver Spring, MD.: Bread for the World Institute, 1994).

orientation activity: part I

TRANSPARENCY (1 OF 3)

WHO IS HUNGRY?



Karen Geller, "For Food Security, 'Mobilize African Brainpower'", Interview with Professor Thomas Odhiambo, *African Farmer* No. 12 (July 1994): 10.
Reprinted with permission from The Hunger Project.

Table 6.1 Prevalence of Chronic Undernutrition in Developing Regions

Region	1969-71		1979-81		1988-90	
	Millions of Undemourished	Proportion of Total Population %	Millions of Undemourished	Proportion of Total Population %	Millions of Undemourished	Proportion of Total Population %
Africa	101	35	128	33	168	33
Asia	751	40	645	28	528	19
Latin America	54	19	47	13	59	13
Middle East	35	22	24	12	31	12
Total Developing Regions	941	36	844	26	786	20

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *The State of Food and Agriculture, 1992* (FAO, Rome, 1992), p. 22.

Note: Seventy-two countries with a population of less than 1 million, representing 0.6 percent of the developing world's population, were excluded from the table total.

World Resources Institute, *World Resources 1994-95*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 108.

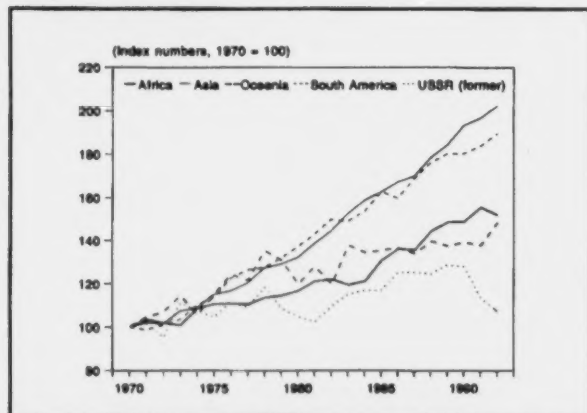
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orientation activity: part I

TRANSPARENCY (2 OF 3)

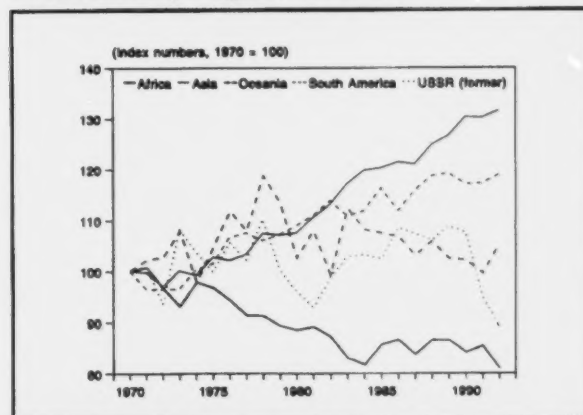
WHERE IS FOOD PRODUCED?

Figure 6.1 Index of Food Production by Region, 1970-92



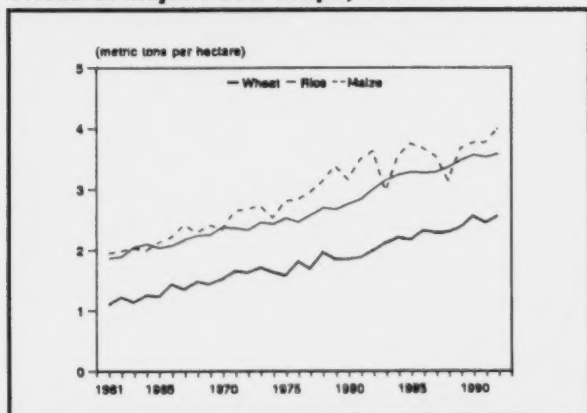
Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Agrostat PC*, on diskette (FAO, Rome, 1993).

Figure 6.2 Index of Per Capita Food Production by Region, 1970-92



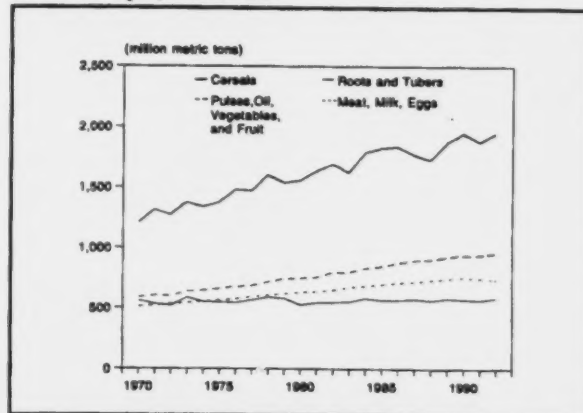
Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Agrostat PC*, on diskette (FAO, Rome, 1993).

Figure 6.3 World Average of Per-Hectare Yields of Major Food Crops, 1961-92



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Agrostat PC*, on diskette (FAO, Rome, 1993).

Figure 6.4 World Production of Selected Food Crops, 1970-92



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Agrostat PC*, on diskette (FAO, Rome, 1993).

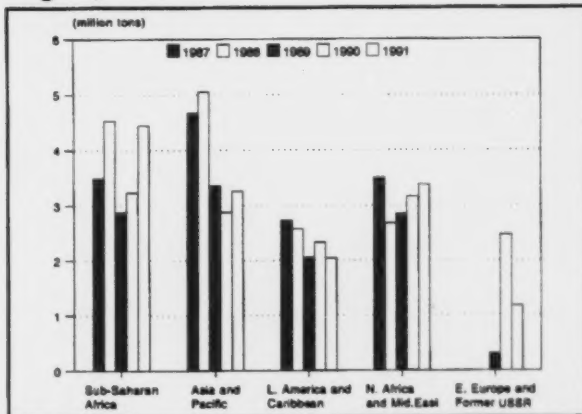
All graphs from World Resources Institute, *World Resources 1994-95*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 108-109. Reprinted with permission from World Resources Institute.

orientation activity: part I

TRANSPARENCY (3 OF 3)

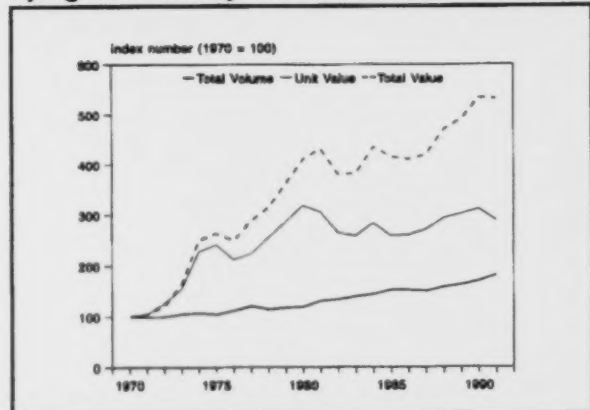
HOW AND WHERE IS FOOD DISTRIBUTED? WHO HAS ACCESS TO FOOD?

Figure 6.6 Total Food Aid Deliveries by Region, 1987-91



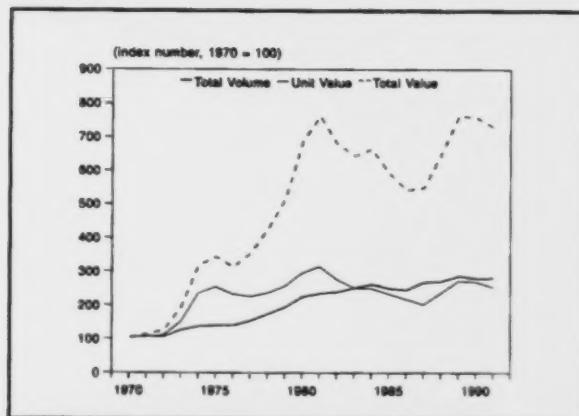
Source: World Food Programme (WFP), 1992 Food Aid Review (WFP, Rome, 1992), p. 12.

Figure 6.7 Index of Food Exports from Developing Countries by Volume and Value, 1970-91



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Agrostat PC*, on diskette (FAO, Rome, 1993).

Figure 6.8 Index of Food Imports into Developing Countries by Volume and Value, 1970-91



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Agrostat PC*, on diskette (FAO, Rome, 1993).

All graphs from World Resources Institute, *World Resources 1994-95*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 110-111. Reprinted with permission from World Resources Institute.

orientation activity: part I

HANDOUT (1 OF 2)

OVERVIEW OF WORLD HUNGER

Two decades ago, the 1974 World Food Conference in Rome expressed alarm at the prospect of long-term food shortages and massive starvation in developing countries. However, every year since then, the world has had more than adequate food supplies for everyone to enjoy a minimally adequate diet....Since 1974, the number and proportion of chronically undernourished people (i.e., people who do not consume enough protein and calories) has fallen significantly.

But global food supplies are not evenly distributed. Nearly 800 million people (20 percent of the developing world's population) remained undernourished in 1990....Seventy percent of the world's hungry people live in the Asia-Pacific region, but both the number and proportion of hungry people has fallen there since 1970. In contrast, the absolute number and percentage of hungry people has increased in sub-Saharan Africa....Poor economic conditions during the 1980s also led to increased hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean. Hunger has declined substantially in the Middle East, but 12 million people remain undernourished.

Though many people are likely to think of famine when they hear the word "hunger," famine actually affects relatively few people and the amount of food needed to prevent it is relatively small. Famines can be caused by drought and other natural catastrophes, such as floods or earthquakes, or by human actions such as war, civil conflict, and the use of food as a weapon. The Alan Shawn Feinstein World Hunger Program at Brown University estimates that in 1992, 157 million people, or 3 percent of the world's population, lived in countries affected by famine or food shortage (though not everyone in these countries actually suffered from hunger).

In the industrial world, economic changes have reduced wages among low-skill workers. Governments face political and financial constraints in their ability to fund social welfare programs. These trends have contributed to growing food insecurity. In the United States, many low-income people find that they run out of food at the end of the month. But hunger in wealthy nations is neither as severe nor as widespread as in developing nations.

Peter Uvin et al., "Overview of World Hunger" in *Hunger 1995: Causes of Hunger*, (Silver Spring, MD.: Bread for the World Institute, 1994), 10.

orientation activity: part I

HANDOUT (2 OF 2)

KEY WORDS

Key Words	Definition
agroforestry	a land and crop management system that strives to increase yields by combining the production of woody forest crops with cultivated or field crops on the same unit of land
cash crops	crops, often either for beverages or non-food items, grown for export, such as cotton, coffee, cocoa, and tea
colonialism	with reference to Africa, the long-term impact on politics, economics, and environment of European rule from 1880s to 1960s and 1970s
deforestation	the destruction of forest resources in such a widespread fashion that it leads to soil loss and the permanent decline of forest resources
desertification	the change of arable land into a desert, either from natural causes or human activity, such as the destruction of soil through over-farming or over-grazing of animals that causes drying up or blowing away of soil base
developing countries	countries in which most people have a low economic standard of living. Also known as the "Third World," the "South," and the "less developed countries."
extension services	technical assistance, training, and educational programs provided by governments to help farmers improve their farming practices or to introduce new crops and animals to rural areas
famine	local or regional failure of food production and/or distribution systems, leading to an extreme scarcity of food—often causing wide spread starvation and death
foreign aid/food aid	to provide help, support, or relief through food resources (such as grains), loans, or technical assistance
Green revolution	a term used to describe specific technological changes in agricultural production methods since World War II. These technologies rely on the use of improved seeds—known as high-yielding varieties—chemical fertilizers, and pesticides.
hunger	a condition in which people lack the basic food intake to provide them with the energy and nutrients for fully productive, active, and healthy lives

orientation activity: part I

International Monetary Fund (IMF)	an international organization that makes loans to countries that have foreign exchange and monetary problems. These loans are conditioned upon the willingness of the borrowing country to adopt IMF-approved economic policies.
malnutrition	failure to achieve nutrient requirements, which can impair physical and/or mental health. Malnutrition may result from consuming too little food or a shortage or imbalance of key nutrients.
nongovernmental organization (NGO)	in international development, agencies such as CARE and Oxfam that provide assistance for humanitarian needs, both short- and long-term. These agencies are independent from governments, the World Bank, or IMF.
patronage	in politics, giving benefits, jobs or investment to specific regional or ethnic groups in order to gain or maintain support for governmental officials
policy	a plan or course of action, as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters
sustainability	society's ability to shape its economic and social systems so as to maintain both natural resources and human life
structural adjustment program (SAP)	economic policy changes, often imposed upon an indebted country by its lenders as a condition for future loans, intended to stimulate economic growth
technology transfer	in the case of farming, the introduction of new technologies (seeds, fertilizer, mechanized equipment, pesticides) from other countries or continents with the purpose of increasing output. Defenders claim it is necessary for food security, critics argue that too often the technologies are inappropriate for the local ecology or economy.
tropical agriculture	agriculture in the tropical ecosystems that requires different technologies, crops, and farming practices due to the different climate and soil types. Different from temperate agriculture, which is characteristic of much of the United States and Europe.
undernutrition	a form of mild, chronic, or acute malnutrition which is characterized by inadequate intake of food energy (measured by calories), usually due to eating too little. Stunting, wasting, and being underweight are common forms of undernutrition.
World Bank	an intergovernmental agency that makes long-term loans to the governments of developing nations in sectors such as health, agriculture, education, etc.

Orientation Activities

PART II: HUNGER IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY

Overview

The purpose of this Orientation Activity is to provide students with contextual information that will enable them to investigate factors affecting hunger using Sub-Saharan Africa as a case study.

Objectives

- to identify some of the geographical features of Africa that contribute the conditions of hunger and to identify the locations used in the resource card examples
- to examine data on food production and distribution in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- to consider the human face of hunger in Sub-Saharan Africa

Time

Two class periods

Suggested Procedure

1. Begin by asking students to think about why Africa might provide a good case study for an investigation of hunger. Remind them that hunger exists throughout the world in both developing and developed countries, and that, although hunger is a persistent problem in Africa, not all African people are hungry.
2. Ask students to give words or phrases describing Africa. Write these words on the chalkboard. Using these words as a starting point, give a brief overview of Africa, taking care to avoid and counteract stereotypes of Africa such as the starving child, Tarzan/jungles, "savage" people, and "primitive" ways of life. Emphasize that Africa is a large and diverse continent with over 50 countries and approximately 1,000 languages. Its total land area is approximately three times that of the United States, and its human history is rich and varied. Give examples of both rural and urban environments and "traditional" and "modern" ways of living. If your textbook provides general background on Africa, you may want to assign textbook readings or related activities. You may also want to work with your school librarian to develop a reference shelf of books on Africa and on world hunger for use during the unit.
3. Using the transparency, African Ecological Zones, ask students to speculate about how environmental factors, such as the climates on the map, might influence the production and distribution of food in different parts of Africa.
4. Distribute the handout, Blank Political Map of Africa. Ask students to work in pairs to locate and label the following countries: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Ghana, Guinea,

orientation activity: part II

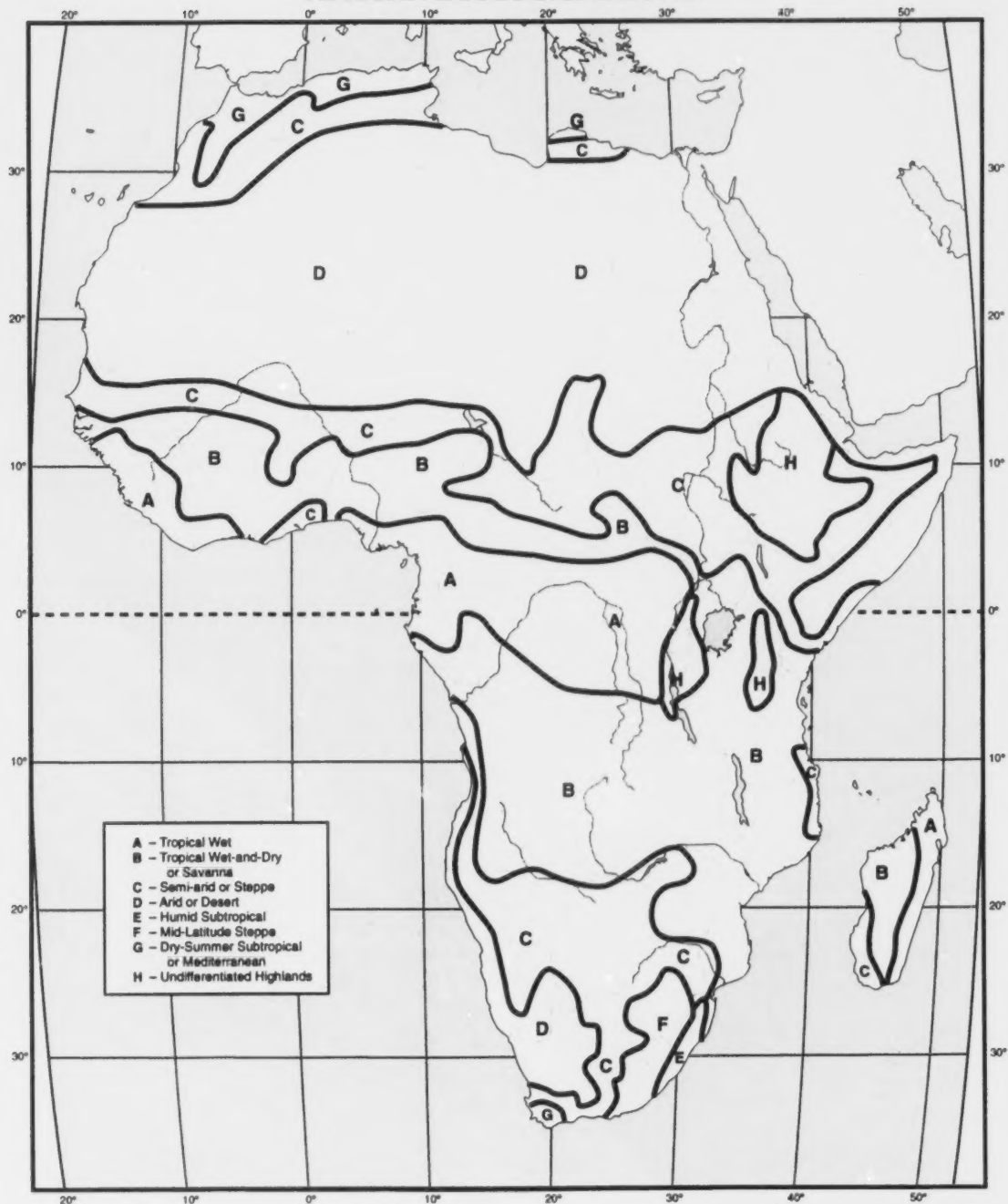
Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire, and Zimbabwe.

5. When the students have finished their map work, display the transparency, African Ecological Zones, again. Review each country identified in Step 4 and discuss how environmental factors might affect the production or availability of food in these areas.
6. Divide the students into small groups of 4-6 students. Distribute the Activity Card and Resource Cards 1-4 (one set per group). Students will work in groups to answer the questions and complete the task on the Activity Card. When the students' work is completed, debrief that activity using the questions on the Activity Card. You may want to display their partially-completed murals until the Closure Activity, when they will be finished by the students.
7. Review the area on the bulletin board that lists the causes of hunger. Ask the students if they would make any additions or deletions based on what they have learned. It is suggested that you come back to this bulletin board for a similar discussion at the end of each day's activities.

orientation activity: part II

TRANSPARENCY

AFRICAN ECOLOGICAL ZONES

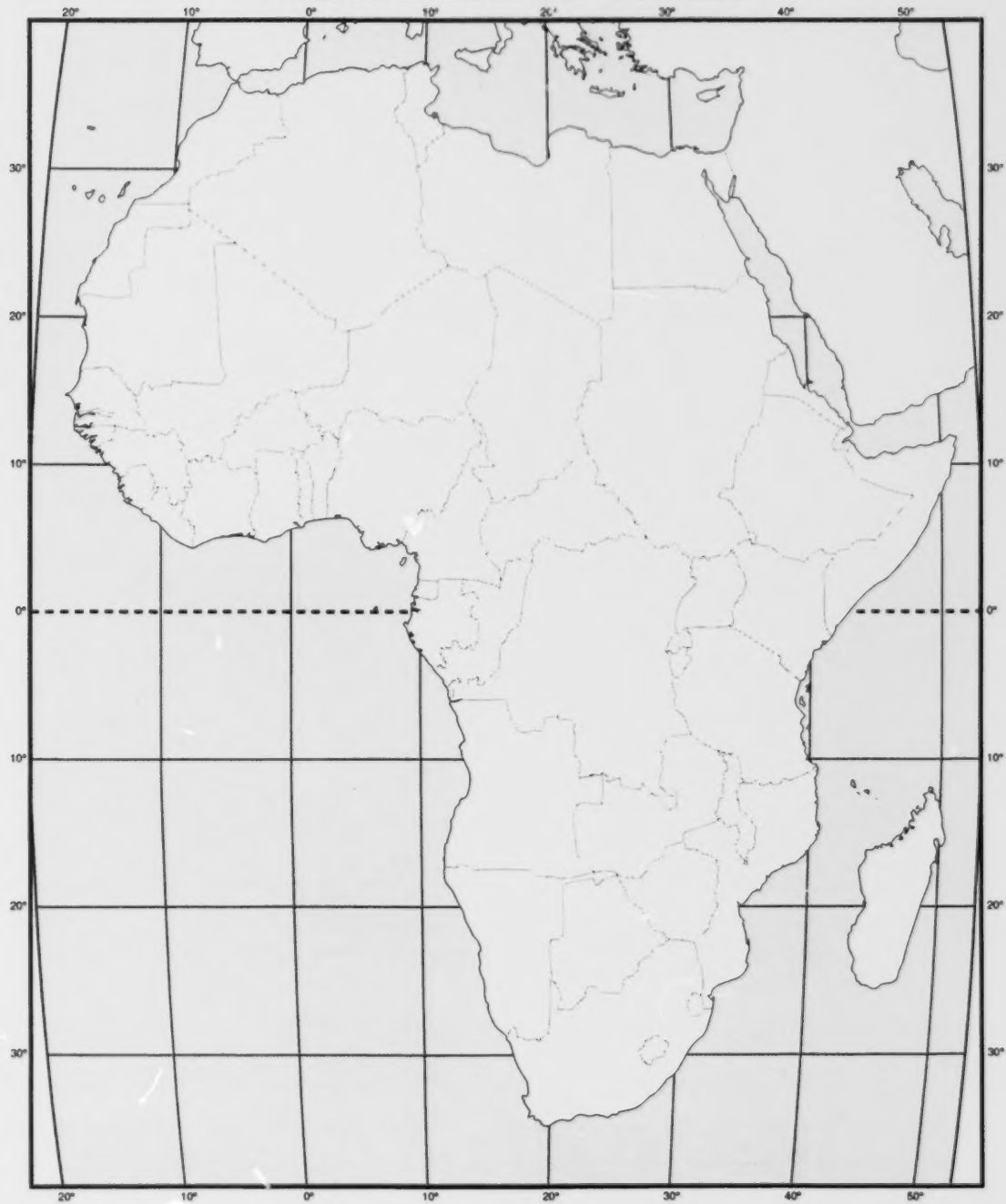


from Stephen Commins, *Mapping Africa*, (Stanford, Ca.: SPICE, 1994), 43.

orientation activity: part II

HANDOUT

BLANK POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA



from Stephen Commins, *Mapping Africa*, (Stanford, Ca.: SPICE, 1994), 27.

orientation activity: part II

ACTIVITY CARD

As a group, study Resource Cards 1-4 and discuss the questions below:

1. How do we know that hunger is a persistent problem in Africa? What evidence leads to that conclusion?
2. How would you explain why, at the same time food production in Africa is growing, the amount of food available per person is declining? How does this compare to patterns for the world as a whole?
3. What are some of the ways that food imports and exports might affect the available supply of food?
4. What are some of the factors besides food shortages that might make it difficult for people to obtain enough food?
5. Can statistics about poverty or the availability of food on a national or international level tell us about the presence or absence of hunger in individual cities, villages, or households? Explain.
6. How would it feel to not have enough food each day?

GROUP TASK

As a group, begin a mural called the "Face of Hunger in Africa" using what you have learned so far. Add at least one element that demonstrates that hunger is not a problem found only in Africa. Leave space in the mural to add additional features at the end of the unit.

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orientation activity: part II

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 4)

THE AVOIDABLE FAMINE

Relief operations in Sudan are failing to move sufficient food into famine-hit areas to avert hundreds of thousands of deaths. Fuel and spares shortages, not to mention the risk of attack in remote areas, mean that not enough lorries are being mobilized. The rains are making many roads and railways impassable, and even if airlifts are started, they will be more symbolic than adequate to the need. Yet this is a famine that need not have happened....

In many parts of eastern, western and northern Sudan, drought has been the principal agent of famine, killing herds and causing crop failure....Elsewhere, war has been the main factor; in the south and southwest, farmers have been subjected to cattle raiding or driven off their lands by warring armies and "militias." Many are unable to leave government-held garrison towns in the south which have run out of food....

There is a serious shortage of seed for this year's planting....Village farmers...are already in debt to local merchants, to whom they have pledged a large share of the next crop in return for the seed to sow in the first place. The same problems of patronage that dominate agriculture also afflict the distribution of relief aid.

If Sudan as a country is to survive this famine, and to reduce the risk of another, the first priority must be to restore peace and stability, and the second must be to ensure future agricultural development that is both equitable and sustainable.

Peter Verney, "The Avoidable Famine," *Food Matters Worldwide* No. 12 (July 1991): 14.

orientation activity: part II

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 4)

A DAY LIKE ANY OTHER DAY

Nine-year-old Osman got out of bed. His bed was a thin mat on the dirt floor that he shared with three of his brothers. His mother's and sisters' mats nearby were already empty. He went outside, blinking his eyes in the light of the rising sun. He dipped himself a bit of water out of a jug by the door, and walked over to the hole his family used for a toilet.

Coming back to the house, he saw his mother and sisters returning from the river with the water jugs on their heads. Even his little sister Amina was helping. He smiled at her, letting her know...she was doing a good job....

Osman went back into the house and woke his brothers up. In a few minutes they left on their three-mile walk to school in a neighboring village....When they got to school, the teacher was passing out breakfast. Every morning the children were given little biscuits or bowls of rice, and sometimes they drank milk from powder....

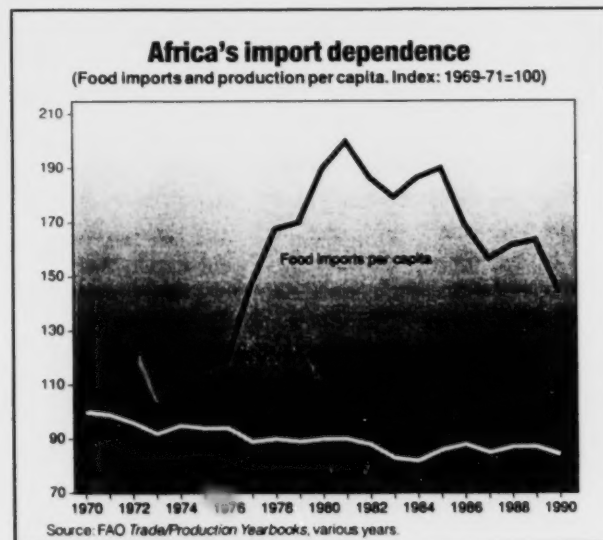
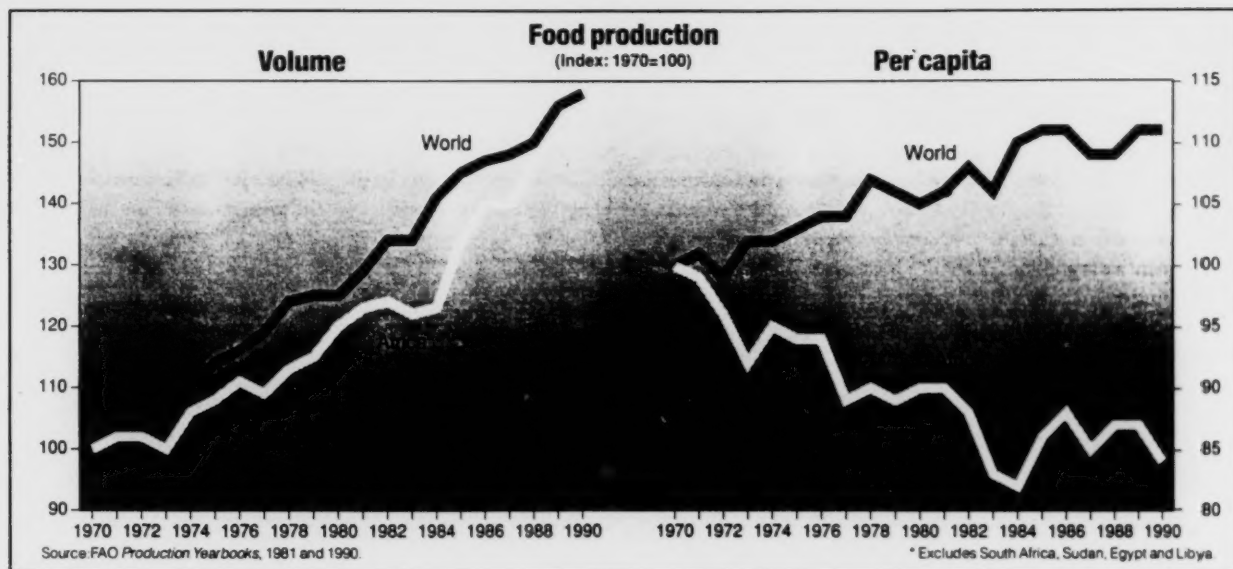
Every morning his sisters Radia and Ekila, who were 11 and 10, fed the babies a little cold rice left over from dinner. Then...they went out to the field to help their mother who was already at work. The three of them weeded for hours, before the sun got too hot, and then went home to make the morning meal....The girls never even thought to ask their mother what they would have, since they ate the same thing every day: a small scoop of rice with a spicy red sauce and some green vegetables. But at least they had food to eat. Radia was old enough to remember the year all the vegetables in the garden had died, and there hadn't been anything to eat for many days....

After school, the boys returned home. "Mother," Osman asked, "do you think Father will come home soon?" One of the boys at school said his father just came home, and he brought them sweets from the city. "I don't know," his mother replied. "But maybe it will be soon. I hope so." Like many others in their village, the children knew their father was in the city to earn money, but they missed him a lot. The family needed the money he earned in the city to buy seeds and other things. Every year he came home to plant peanuts and other crops and left until it was time to pick again.

Reprinted from *Kids Ending Hunger: What Can We Do?* by Tracy Howard and Sage Howard (Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1992), by permission of the authors.

orientation activity: part II

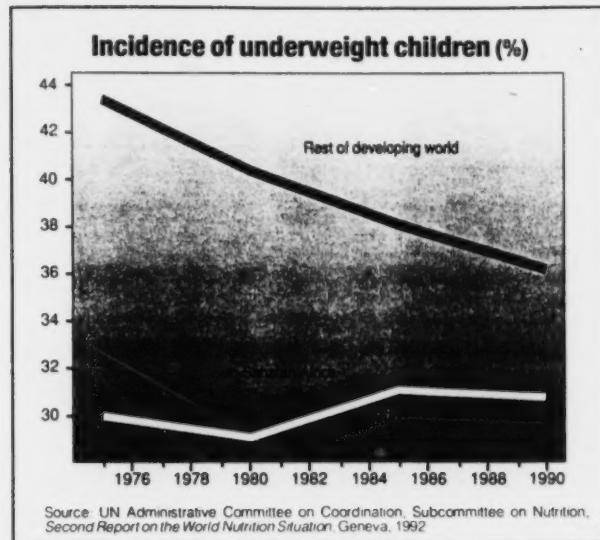
RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 4)



Both graphs from Simon Maxwell, "Food Security in Africa: Priorities for Reducing Hunger," *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper* No. 6 (September 1992): 1-6. Courtesy of UN Africa Recovery.

orientation activity: part II

RESOURCE CARD (4 OF 4)



Poverty in the developing world

	Sub-Saharan Africa		All developing countries	
	1985	1989	1985	1989
Higher poverty line				
Number of poor (mn)	191	228	1049	1131
% of population	49.4	52.0	30.4	30.3
Lower poverty line				
Number of poor (mn)	126	153	605	654
% of population	32.5	34.9	17.6	17.5

Source: World Bank

Table and graph from Simon Maxwell, "Food Security in Africa: Priorities for Reducing Hunger," *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper* No. 6 (September 1992): 2-7.
Courtesy of UN Africa Recovery.

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Activity One

HOW DOES CONFLICT AFFECT HUNGER?

- Activity 1 explores the role of physical conflict in contributing to the conditions of hunger.



The end of the Cold War has brought a reduction in tensions between East and West, and the lessening of conflict in some parts of the world. However, over the past five years, conflict has increased in a number of regions, including the Balkans, the Caucasus and parts of Africa. One of the results of the increased conflict has been the spread of hunger and food shortages in places ranging from Azerbaijan and Bosnia to Somalia and Angola, as warfare has disrupted agricultural production.

The connection between hunger and conflict is not new in Africa or other parts of the world. In the mid-1980s, the country of Ethiopia was afflicted by a devastating famine that was the result of both drought and a long-running civil war. The war prevented many farmers from working in their fields or from tending their crops during weeding and harvesting time. Drought reduced the overall output in Ethiopia, making millions of people more vulnerable to hunger. Finally, the war made it difficult for humanitarian organizations to provide relief supplies, especially large quantities of food aid, to regions where there were food shortages. Conflict situations continue to create hunger both through the immediate disruption of food supplies and the longer-term devastation of rural economies. Responses by international humanitarian organizations have been hampered by several factors. Each conflict has political factors that often slow down relief efforts. Attempts at resuming normal farming activities are often limited due to lack of security, or the mistrust that people have of different military groups. No conflict is separate from larger political issues, which means that the intervention of the United Nations or individual governments is rarely welcomed equally by all factions in a conflict. The overall impact on Africa is that hunger has increased since 1990 in a number of countries—Angola, Liberia, Rwanda, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Somalia, among others—due in part to continuing wars.

Outline of Activity

Students review three brief readings that describe the relationship between physical conflict in parts of Africa and the shortage of food. As a group, they discuss the impact of physical conflict on the production and availability of food. They then create a three-dimensional sculpture that illustrates the relationship between hunger and physical conflict.

activity one: hunger and conflict

- Extension Questions
- What happens to farmers in conflict situations?
 - How are government services affected in times of conflict?
 - How are seed reserves affected as a result of conflict?
 - What happens to environmental preservation programs during a war?

- Related Issues
- Cold War
 - arms exports
 - land mines
 - Organization of African Unity

Reference Materials

Africa Recovery, a free United Nations publication. Available from The Editor, *Africa Recovery*, Secretariat Room 931, United Nations, New York, NY 10017.

Marc J. Cohen, ed., *Hunger 1994: Transforming the Politics of Hunger* (Silver Spring, MD: Bread for the World Institute, 1993).

activity one: hunger and conflict

ACTIVITY CARD

As a group, study the Resource Cards and discuss the questions below:

1. How does physical conflict (war) affect the production and distribution of food in Africa?
2. What other areas in the world face problems similar to those in parts of Africa where there is physical conflict?
3. How does war or physical conflict relate to some of the other factors that lead to hunger?
4. How should relief agencies and others respond to a region where conflict is creating or contributing to hunger?
5. When a war ends, what are some of the things that must be done before normal food production and distribution can occur and people in that area can enjoy some measure of food security? How long do you believe recovery will take?

GROUP TASK

Create a three-dimensional sculpture or puzzle that illustrates how physical conflict (war) contributes to hunger. Be prepared to share your work with the rest of the class.

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activity one: hunger and conflict

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 3)

Amid continued warfare and drought, nearly four million Sudanese are threatened by famine, with "catastrophic" conditions for two million southern Sudanese, says UNICEF. In late August, the World Food Program reported that continued fighting was halting efforts to supply food to southern Sudan through Uganda....

Many parts of Liberia remain cut off from relief supplies, and with fighting making planting impossible, WFP has expanded its food program to cover some 2.4 million Liberians, either internally displaced or refugees to Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Liberia's instability has continued to affect neighboring Sierra Leone, where renewed fighting was reported in eastern areas and where some 250,000 people are also receiving relief from U.N. agencies....

The food security situation in Angola remains grave, as fighting continues between government forces and those of the opposition UNITA.

Salim Lone, ed., "Rwanda Crisis Blow for Africa's Development,"
Africa Recovery 8 (April-September 1994): 5-6.

Rwanda. In just a few weeks in 1994, about 300,000 people were slaughtered in the conflict between the Tutsis and Hutu extremists in Rwanda. More than 2 million people took refuge in neighboring countries.

Without food and water, hundreds starved to death. Food supplies were plundered. Crop cycles were interrupted; seeds and breeding livestock were consumed. Markets broke down. Tens of thousands of children suffered permanent damage from too little food and related illnesses.

Peter Uvin, et al., "Overview of World Hunger" in *Hunger: Causes of Hunger* (Silver Spring, Md.: Bread for the World Institute, 1994), 36.

activity one: hunger and conflict

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 3)

Mogadishu, Nov 2—Somalia's children are dying by the tens of thousands because the civil war which has ravaged their country for 22 months prevents planting and decimates livestock. Fleeing their villages, exhausted families pile up each day at the outskirts of towns that have been transformed into places for dying. Those who do not succumb on the way often arrive in a state that leaves little that can be done.

Bertrand Le Gendre, *Le Monde*, 3 Nov. 1992

Many relief workers have been killed in Somalia. UNICEF has lost two international staff members, Sean Devereux, right, and Dr. Martinka Pumpalova.



Photos courtesy of UN Africa Recovery.

A UNITAF soldier provides protection for a food convoy through the devastated streets of Mogadishu.



When the disruptions of war moved southward into Somalia's main farming areas, food production, already hit hard by drought, virtually collapsed. Irrigation plants, seed stocks and agricultural storage facilities were destroyed or looted, and agricultural inputs disappeared from the few markets that were still functioning....Since many farmers also raised some cattle, they initially were able to sell their livestock to withstand the prolonged period of no cultivation. But by 1992 few had any livestock left and were forced to migrate in search of food.

The nomadic pastoralists of the central region also had to slaughter or sell off parts of their cattle and camel herds in order to survive....They saw many of their livestock simply die because of contaminated wells or diseases. Since the pastoralists' diet relies on milk and meat, many were exposed to severe hunger.

While the drought hit food supplies, the breakdown of government amid escalating fighting had crippled health and sanitation systems throughout most of the country....Virtually all urban water distribution systems had broken down....In some towns...there was not enough safe water to cook food....Since 1990, all schools in Somalia, from primary to university level, have shut down, except some primary schools in the northwest that reopened in mid-1991. The facilities were almost all destroyed or looted....

Hardly any aspect of the country's physical or economic infrastructure escaped the devastation. All telecommunications stations were destroyed and telephone cables were looted for their copper. Electricity-generating stations were heavily damaged....Some factories were even dismantled....Somalia's largest towns were reduced to ruins....Markets still functioned in parts of the country, especially in the north, but everywhere the scarcities of food and practically every other essential consumer good drove prices far beyond the reach of most Somalis. The entire formal currency system disappeared....Untold numbers of Somalis were displaced from their homes, many having been forced to move repeatedly over the past two years.

Ernest Harsch, "Somalia: Restoring Hope" *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper* No. 7 (January 1993): 10-11. By permission of UN Africa Recovery.

activity one: hunger and conflict

RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 3)

Exacerbated by civil war, drought, and an anemic economy, Ethiopia's street children population of Addis Ababa has doubled in the last two years from 2 million to 4 million....The end of Ethiopia's 17-year civil war meant the beginning of life on the streets for thousands of children....Internal migration also contributes to Ethiopia's street children problem. In the wake of the civil war, many families have migrated from heavily hit villages to urban centers.... "Life is harder now," Groom Wabe explains. Groom is a 19-year old ex-soldier who lost his left leg and his parents in the recent civil war. Unable to afford rent, he now lives with his older brother on the street in a plastic shelter.... "Everything is more expensive these days; the price of coffee has tripled and we can't afford sugar any more."

Gettleman, Jeffrey, "Sounds of the Street," *Africa Report* 39 (November-December 1994): 32-33.



Addis Ababa
street people:
Groom Wabe, left,
and Secareda Mariam

Photos courtesy of *Africa Report*.

activity one: hunger and conflict

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Name: _____

Imagine you are an Ethiopian farmer. Write down what you would say to a friend now living in London about how your life has been changed by the civil war in your country.

Activity Two

HUNGER AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- Activity 2 explores local community factors that contribute to the existence or prevention of hunger.



No one lives in "Africa." Farmers live in specific, local communities where they have developed different forms of agriculture to meet their food and other resource needs. Farming requires tools, access to land, water, seeds, possibly credit, and enough labor to plant, weed, tend and harvest crops. All of these inputs are chosen by farmers based upon their experiences and learning over many years.

The experiences that people have gained over years of farming provide an important resource of knowledge and understanding about agricultural conditions. This knowledge can be essential in ensuring that appropriate farming techniques are applied in a particular community. At the same time, the relatively low level of agricultural productivity has been taken as an argument for providing new technologies and resources for farmers across the continent.

Over the past 40 to 50 years, the predominant approach to agricultural development in Africa has assumed that technology and knowledge from outside the continent were necessary for improving food production. The high productivity of agriculture in North America and Western Europe contrasted starkly with the much lower levels of productivity per acre and per person in Africa. This perspective sees the introduction of fertilizers, pesticides, new seed varieties, and new farming tools as central to the task of improving food production.

In the past 15 years, an alternative point of view has arisen. This point of view holds that many of the technologies and resources introduced from outside of Africa have not helped and perhaps have even harmed food output. This view believes that the priority for improving food production should be focused on using local knowledge and technologies found within local communities. The introduction of outside resources would be kept to a minimum, although most people agree that it is impossible to set out a formula that would cover all situations. There are a few people who believe that no outside technologies should be introduced into African agriculture, but that viewpoint is held by a small minority.

Outline of Activity

Students examine articles, diagrams, graphs, and a section of a comic book that illustrate a number of personal and community-level decisions that may affect local food security. They discuss the relative value of local agricultural knowledge, new technologies, food aid, and individual decisions on matters such as family planning. As a group students complete a comic strip that illustrates how a local community might deal with an offer of food aid.

activity two: hunger and local communities

Extension Questions

- What are the best resources that could be brought from outside a community to make its agriculture more productive?
- How can the local experiences of farmers be better utilized in improving food production?
- What type of education could be beneficial to local farmers?

Related Issues

- Agricultural technology
- Biotechnology
- Seed patents
- Pesticides

Reference Materials

African Farmer (quarterly publication). Available from The Hunger Project, 15 E. 26th St., New York, NY 10010.

Africa Recovery, a free United Nations publication. Available from The Editor, *Africa Recovery*, Secretariat Room 931, United Nations, New York, NY 10017.

activity two: hunger and local communities

ACTIVITY CARD

As a group, examine the Resource Cards and discuss the questions below:

1. What kinds of local decisions affect the availability of food in a local community?
2. How does local knowledge of farming help or hinder local food security?
3. What are the advantages/disadvantages of using local, traditional knowledge of farming methods compared to introducing new farming practices and technologies such as fertilizers, pesticides, and hybrid seeds.
4. Do food donations from relief agencies or the government contribute to long-term food security? Explain.
5. How do personal decisions on such matters as family planning affect the production and availability of food? Why do poor farmers often have large families?

GROUP TASK

As a group, create a comic strip that continues the story illustrated on Resource Card 3. When your comic strip is complete, add it to the bulletin board on hunger and be prepared to discuss what you have developed with the class.

activity two: hunger and local communities

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 4)

Agroforestry, or the interplanting of trees and crops, is generally considered the preserve of specialists, but for the Chagga people of Tanzania it is simply a big name for something they have been doing for centuries without any external help.

The Chagga live on the southern slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro, where they have developed an extremely refined system of agroforestry and irrigation. An intimate knowledge of their rainforest environment has led them to apply the best ecological principles in home gardens, admired by agronomists and foresters from around the world.

When they settled in the area several hundred years ago, the Chagga cut just enough trees to be able to plant their own banana trees under the forest canopy. Now they grow 15 kinds of bananas, beneath which come coffee, bushes, and then, below them, a variety of vegetables including aubergines, yams, beans, potatoes, onions and tomatoes. The forest trees provide shade for the crops, animal fodder and mulch for the land, as well as medicines, fruit, nuts, timber for construction and firewood. The sale of coffee gives the Chagga a cash income....

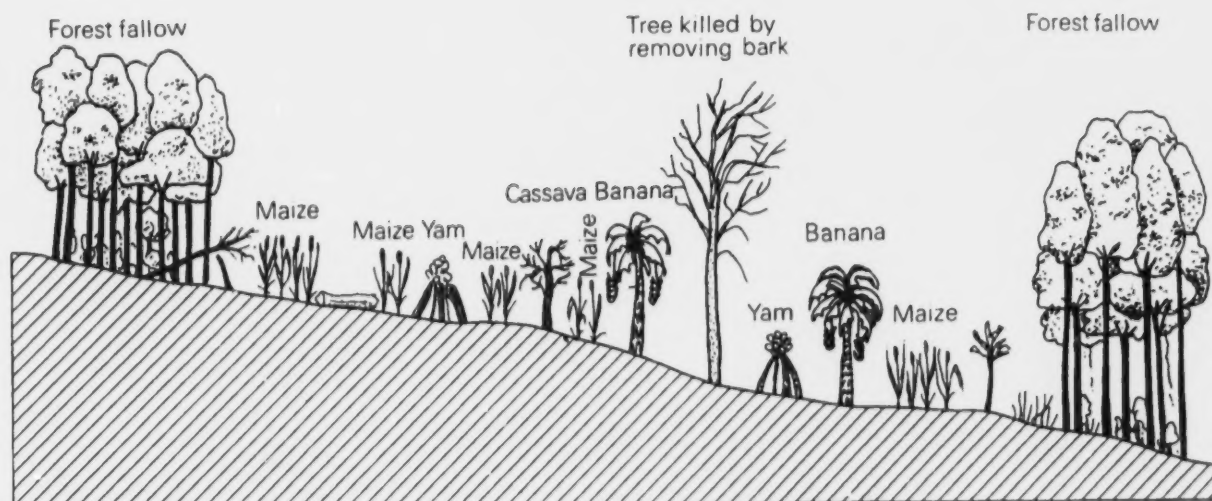
With their highly-developed and sustainable techniques, the Chagga are able to support the highest density of population in Tanzania. And while it is true that conditions of the slopes of Kilimanjaro are particularly favorable, some of their methods, like the traditional practices of some other peoples in Africa, should be capable of adaptation to communities elsewhere.

Robin Sharp and Mahamodou Koné, "A Future Rooted in Africa's Soil: Environment, Development and the Search for Sustainability," *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper*, No. 5 (June 1992): 10.

activity two: hunger and local communities

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 4)

CROSS-SECTION OF CULTIVATION IN THE TROPICAL FOREST OF ZAIRE



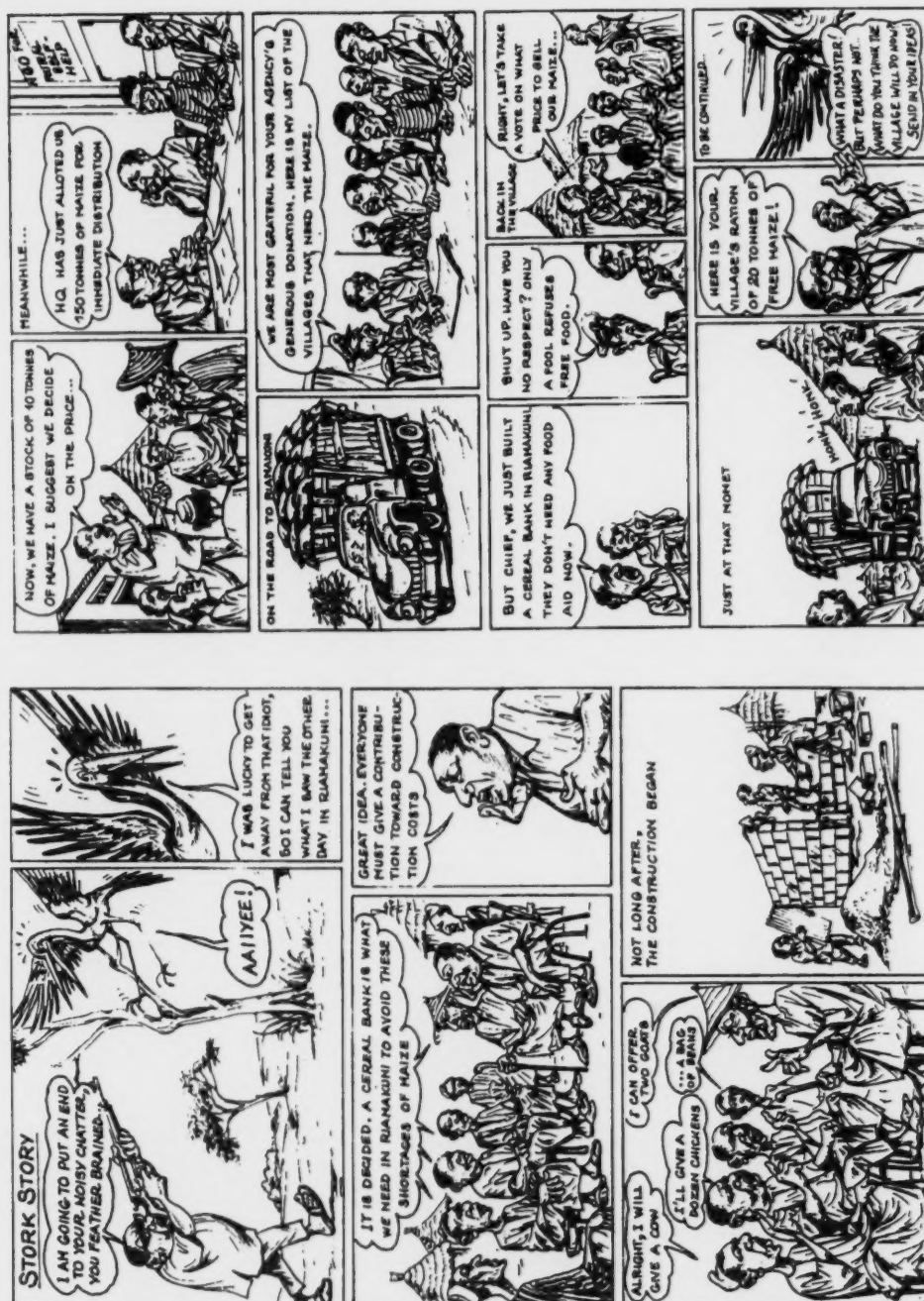
(b) Cross-section of a field

Forest people such as the Sakata of Zaire plant vegetables, maize, tobacco, plantains, and sweet potatoes in small gardens around their houses. Household waste is put on these plots and the crops are protected from the depredations of monkeys and other animals. During the dry season, from July to September, the Sakata clear other plots in the forest farther away from their homes. The vegetation is cut down with a machete and the debris is burned on the spot, thus providing some additional nutrients to the soil....In the clearings, the Sakata make mounds on which they grow cassava and in between they plant bananas, plantains, maize and tobacco. The plots look disorderly because a large variety of crops are grown together or in sequence. The aim of the Sakata is to obtain harvests of fresh food throughout the year thus making storage unnecessary, for in the humid climate stored crops deteriorate rapidly....The interruption of the natural closed cycle of growth and decay causes soil fertility to decline. For a time crops thrive...[but] once the crops fail to grow healthily the clearing is abandoned and forest vegetation invades the area once more. The Sakata generally abandon plots after three years and move on to clear other sites.

Both resources from A.T. Grove and F.M.G. Klein, *Rural Africa*,
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 34-36.
Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University Press.

activity two: hunger and local communities

RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 4)



"Stork Story," Baobab 13 (March 1994): 18-19.
Courtesy of Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN).

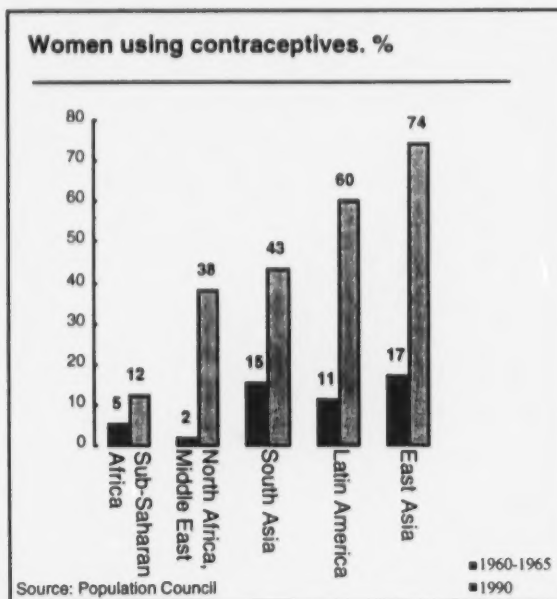
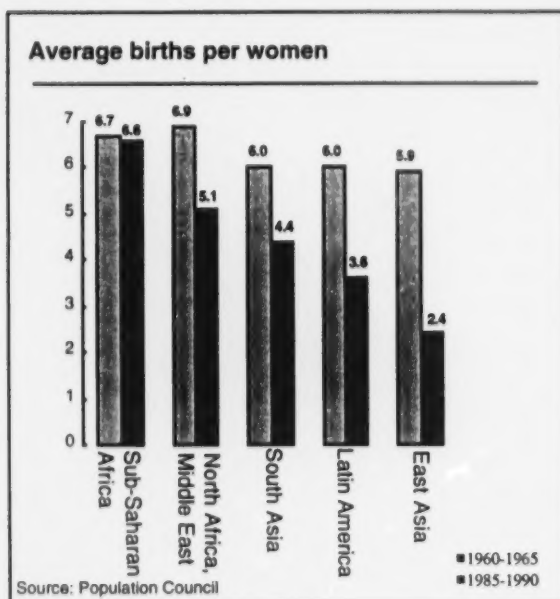
activity two: hunger and local communities

RESOURCE CARD (4 OF 4)

Throughout rural Burkina Faso, villagers have been engrossed in the travails of a young couple named Fatouma and Tanga. Those are the lead characters in "Fatouma, the Baby Machine", an innovative play that conveys family planning facts and issues in a way that sticks. Performed by a traveling theater troupe, "Fatouma" culminates with much of the audience on stage, playing the characters and improvising the plot...

With few means of mass communication available, Burkina Faso turned to popular oral dialogue to get the family planning message across. And it seems to have worked. When researchers went several months later to the 15 rural communities where the play had been performed, they found villagers' recall of the information nearly perfect. That outcome did not result in any immediate decrease in local birth rates. But more farmers were visiting clinics to discuss their options, often accompanied by their husbands....

After the performance spectators are asked to replay certain roles and scenes with which they did not agree. This part usually lasts up to two hours and a great deal of debate takes place during the role-playing. Women are reluctant at first, but after the first one comes forward, the rest enthusiastically join in.



Excerpt and graphs from Joy Morrison, "Communicating With Culture: Theater Reaches Villagers,"
African Farmer No. 13 (October 1994): 26.
Reprinted with permission from The Hunger Project.

activity two: hunger and local communities

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Name: _____

How do local community decisions affect hunger?

What are some positive steps that local communities can take to help create food security for themselves?

Activity Three

HUNGER AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- Activity 3 explores government policies and their effects on the availability of food or lack thereof.



When African countries became independent from European colonial rule in the early 1960s, there were great expectations that the future was bright for the continent. There was the hope that African countries would be able to develop their economies rapidly with the end of foreign rule. Popular national leaders, Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) and Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), had led the movement for independence from colonial rule. They came to office promising that their countries would achieve great economic gains within a generation. In many cases, their economic policies were failures, and the failures were notable in the food producing sector, where production per person stagnated or declined in many countries by the mid-1970s.

While many Africans once blamed their food problems on external causes, over the past 15 years there has been a gradual shift from the externalist perspective to one that argues the primary cause of food shortages and hunger is the result of internal factors, especially the policies of African governments. This argument does not necessarily ignore the external factors, such as the increase in oil prices or the declining prices for Africa's exports. However, it argues that the ways in which African governments have undercut food and agricultural production have been more important.

Farming begins with the access to land and markets. Land must be fertile enough to produce crops and have access to water (through rainfall, wells, streams, or irrigation) in order to keep the crops healthy. To the outside observer, the continent of Africa does not appear to be troubled with the problem of land in the way that more densely populated countries such as Bangladesh or El Salvador might be. The reality is different. Because so much of the continent's land is either arid or quite fragile, there are constraints in many countries in terms of the availability of good farmland. In colonies such as Rhodesia, Angola, and Kenya, the patterns of land ownership as well as access to water resources were dramatically altered by European settlers. Although European colonial rule is no longer in place, many of the land tenure systems have not been changed by the new "majority" governments.

Due to political factors, farmers were also denied direct access to markets. A number of governments established state-owned monopolies that controlled the price of food crops and export crops. In order to keep city residents politically quiet, farmers were paid low prices for food crops. Marketing boards were given sole authority to buy and sell cash-earning crops such as coffee, cocoa, and tea. Farmers were prohibited from accepting offers from private merchants or foreign businesses for their crops. Extension services for farmers often favored wealthier or politically connected individuals. The ability of governments to provide

activity three: hunger and government policies

services, even when well intentioned, has also been severely limited by the steady economic decline in many countries. The end result has been the weakening of the ability of governments to contribute positively to food production, while some of the obstacles remain in place.

Outline of Activity

Students examine several articles discussing government policies in Zimbabwe and Benin. They discuss the role, effectiveness, and impact of regional and national government in setting and implementing food policies. As a group, they develop a news program to explore different perspectives on a policy regarding land ownership.

Extension Questions

- What could governments do to better assist farmers?
- How can governments change to better respond to poor communities?
- What could farmers do to ensure their governments provide the services they need?
- How can farmers receive fair prices for their crops?

Related Issues

- Democratization
- Agricultural extension services
- Free market
- Land ownership/availability

Reference Materials

African Farmer (quarterly publication). Available from The Hunger Project, 15 E. 26th St., New York, NY 10010.

Harden, Blaine. *Africa: Dispatches from a Fragile Continent*. New York: Norton Press, 1990.

activity three: hunger and government policies

ACTIVITY CARD

As a group, examine the Resource Cards and discuss the questions below:

1. What government services might be helpful to farmers and others to ensure that there will be enough food for all?
2. How do land policies in a country affect food production and access to food?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of government policies that determine food prices—both within a country and for export?
4. What is meant by the term *technology transfer*? How would farmers' ability to produce food be affected by government control of the transfer of technology?

GROUP TASK

As a group, develop a television news segment that will help people understand the perspectives of both the government of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Farmers Union regarding the Land Acquisition Act. You may want to conduct interviews with people in different places in Zimbabwe or interview leaders from both the government and the union. If it will help viewers understand the issues more fully, you may want to address other government policy issues in addition to land ownership in your program. Make sure that each member of your group participates in the television program in some way. Be prepared to present your program to the class.

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activity three: hunger and government policies

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 3)

For the last three decades, the agricultural politics of Benin have been dominated by technology transfer controlled by the state, which goes some way to explaining the current crisis affecting the agricultural sector of our country. Many of the solutions suggested are diametrically opposed to our own ideas, and have involved direct transfer of intensive systems originally developed for European agriculture. After thirty years of development, agriculture has been pushed to the margins of our society. Farmers have gained few rewards; their lifestyle has stagnated if not actually declined.

Cesaire Gnangle, "Benin," *Ecology and Farming* 7 (June 1994): 11.

activity three: hunger and government policies

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 3)

"THE BEAUTYFUL ONES ARE NOT YET BORN"

How long will Africa be cursed with its leaders? There were men dying from the loss of hope, and others were finding gaudy ways to enjoy power they did not have. We were ready here for big and beautiful things, but what we had was our own black men hugging new paunches scrambling to ask the white man to welcome them onto our backs. These men who were to lead us out of our despair, they came like men already grown fat and cynical with the eating of centuries of power they had never struggled for, old before they had ever been born into power, and ready only for the grave.

Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*
(New York: Houghton Mifflin, edn. 1969), p. 79.

activity three: hunger and government policies

RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 3)

Once again the issue of land redistribution has come to the fore in Zimbabwe as the Government recently announced its intention of designating 70 farms for resettlement....Some 190,000 hectares of land in 24 districts of Zimbabwe will now be appropriated by the State at a price ruled by the government and allocated to farmers from overcrowded communal areas of the country....The Government announcement has been greeted by a storm of controversy from the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), the body which represents Zimbabwe's 5,000 predominantly white commercial farmers...the CFU claims that the government has reneged on its promise not to designate productive farms but only those which are under-utilized or inefficient....Answering claims that productivity will be lost if commercial farms change ownership, agricultural officials point out that peasant farmers have more than proved themselves in the post-independence period.

Chris Mclvor, "Row Over Zimbabwe Land," *New African* 313 (November 1993): 26.

The long-simmering issue of land redistribution was suddenly placed on the front burner in Zimbabwe in mid-1993 when President Robert Mugabe's government moved to implement the Land Acquisition Act. The act, adopted unanimously by the country's Parliament in March 1992, empowers the government to designate, unilaterally value and purchase half or more of the 11 million hectares of land currently held by the nation's 5,000 large-scale commercial farmers.

The land question is politically charged. The vast majority of the farmers to be affected are white, while the lands to be redistributed will go to rural blacks whose forebears were the victims of forcible, uncompensated expropriation by the British colonial and Rhodesian settler regimes that ruled Zimbabwe until independence in 1980.

"The importance of the land question to the African people cannot be overemphasized," says Herbert Mondhlani of the Zimbabwe Farmers Union. "We can never have peace in this country unless the peasant population is satisfied on this issue...."

While about 3 million hectares were...transferred to some 52,000 black rural households between 1980 and 1992, much of this land was of poor or marginal quality and located in areas of low rainfall. Even where the soil was adequate, many such "resettlement farmers" failed owing to lack of training and experience, inability to secure bank credit, labor shortages or low market prices for their crops.

The commercial sector, on the other hand, occupies the best lands and produces a big majority of the country's marketed output of crops and livestock...

The situation in Zimbabwe is being watched closely—above all in neighboring South Africa, where some 60,000 white farmers still own the bulk of commercial farmland, and where millions of rural blacks remain landless.

Fred Murphy, "Zimbabwe Restoring Land to the People," *African Farmer* No. 10 (January 1994): 34-5.

activity three: hunger and government policies

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Name: _____

What are some of the ways that government decisions might affect the supply and distribution of food?

Activity Four

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND HUNGER?

- Activity 4 examines the role that the natural environment plays in affecting food growth, availability, and distribution.



In the 1960s, both African governments and donor agencies were optimistic about the agricultural potential in both humid and savannah Africa. This optimism has been severely tempered by problems of desertification and deforestation. A large proportion of Africa—in contrast to Latin America or the Indian subcontinent, let alone the temperate zones of agriculture—has poor soils, and farming methods developed for Europe or North America have often proven unsuitable to semi-arid and humid tropical locations. At present there are few proven successes with widespread application for sustaining agricultural production at a level that will both feed local populations and provide for a marketable surplus, as farmers want to earn some income for purchasing various goods.

There are many examples of successful adaptations to local environments by African farmers that could provide the basis for the future. In many countries African farmers have long experience in mixing various crops to both protect the soil base and reduce the threat from drought. Researchers have found much wider local initiative for protecting trees than was earlier believed. New farmers' organizations have been formed to create "green belts" for soil conservation and new resources.

Development projects and foreign aid are often seen as having contributed to the destruction of the continent's resource base, rather than having improved potential productivity. A subcategory of the environmental perspective is sometimes found in the emphasis of the negative impact of population growth. In this study, that issue will be treated as a separate category.

Outline of Activity

Students review information about African ecosystems and environmental issues and examine statistics on deforestation and desertification. They then discuss the role and impact of natural environmental conditions in food production and availability. As a group, they then create a play showing a changing landscape in Burkina Faso and its impact on people's nutrition needs.

activity four: hunger and natural environment

Extension Questions

- How do the ecological systems of Africa affect people's ability to produce food?
- Why is it important to understand a particular ecological system before introducing new crops?
- How important are environmental factors in understanding the causes of hunger?

Related Issues

- Deforestation/Reforestation
- Desertification
- Natural disasters
- Drought
- Earth Summit

Reference Materials

World Resource Institute. *World Resources, 1994-95*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Worldwatch Institute. *State of the World, 1995*, New York: Norton Press, 1995.

activity four: hunger and natural environment

ACTIVITY CARD

As a group, examine the Resource Cards and then answer the following questions:

1. What natural environmental conditions affect the production of food? How does this relationship vary from region to region?
2. How do humans affect the land's ability to produce food?
3. How do ecological concerns such as deforestation and desertification affect food security?
4. What might compete with the production of food when decisions about how to use environmental resources are made?
5. How important is the environment in determining where and how food can be produced? What other things also affect food production and availability?

GROUP TASK

As a group, develop a play about an area in Burkina Faso that has changed over time due to environmental factors and human activities. Your play should tell a story about how these environmental changes affect the availability of food for people living in the area. Include at least three scenes in your play.

activity four: hunger and natural environment

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 4)

TAKE ONE LAST LOOK

Take a seat under a tree
and let the stillness envelop you
let the liana softly stroke your hair
as you watch patches of sunlight
dancing on the fallen leaves.
Listen carefully and you will hear
the gurgling of a nearby stream,
the chat of monkeys
in the branches above you.
Look carefully you will see
the verdant green of
young shoots
straining towards
the sunlight
you will notice the bright splashes of tiny red and
yellow flowers.
Look long and hard,
For you will want
to be able to remember
and describe this to your
grandchildren
when you return
many years from now
and find only a bare,
arid desert.

-Aditi Charda, Tanzania

RESCUE MISSION PLANET EARTH by Children's Task Force on
Agenda 21 by Kingfisher. Copyright Peacechild Charitable Trust 1994.

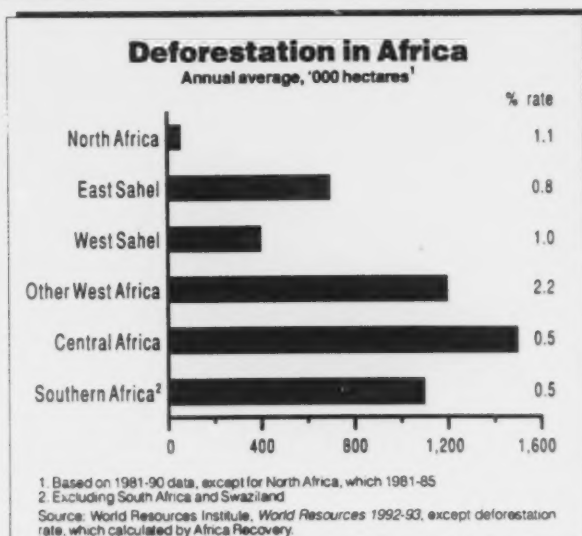
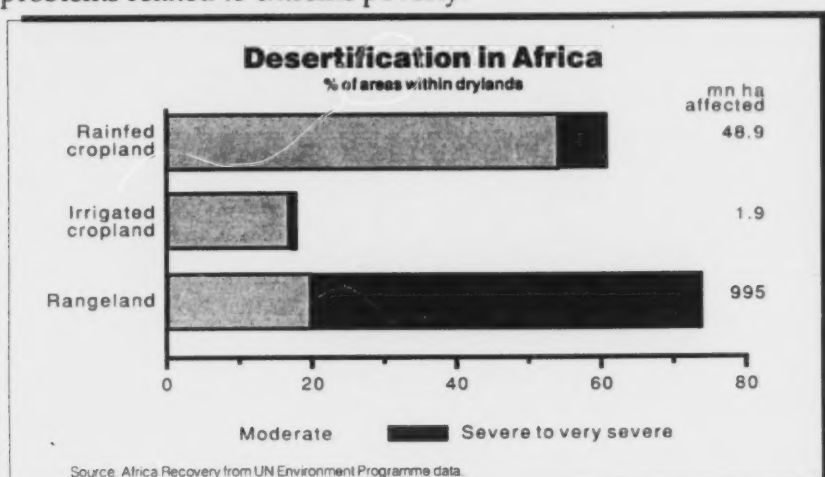
activity four: hunger and natural environment

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 4)

A FUTURE IN AFRICA'S SOIL

As the world's poorest region, beset with many ecological problems, Africa faces a tough battle in blending environmental and development concerns....If effectively harnessed [its people's] knowledge of the environment and traditional productive practices could contribute greatly towards a new development approach based on integrating preservation of Africa's fragile ecological systems with the need to improve economic opportunities and living standards.

....Unlike some other parts of the world where industrial pollution, acid rain or ozone depletion may be of foremost concern, Africans are preoccupied overwhelmingly with soil erosion, desertification, loss of trees, uncertain rainfall and a wide range of problems related to extreme poverty.



All resources from Robin Sharp and Mahamadou Koné, "A Future Rooted in Africa's Soil," *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper No. 5* (June 1992): 1-2. Courtesy of UN Africa Recovery.

activity four: hunger and natural environment

RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 4)



The Catholic church in Korr. Missionaries built up the town, and their wells helped to settle the nomads.

Father Redento established a clinic in Korr; shops sprang up; a school was built; clothes and food were handed out. Many Rendille ate grain for the first time in their lives....Thus the herding families, having just been savaged by drought, found in Korr an almost magical source of permanent water, free grain, modern clothes and medical help. They settled in the town and near by....Three quarters of the entire Rendille tribe have settled either in Korr or in the larger town of Kargi to the north. "A long time ago, when the Rendille were nomads moving from place to place, they used to help poor families. They used to adopt them....Now people are accustomed to famine relief and the problem is that they are just taking."

Did Father Redento mean to encourage the Rendille to settle, to destroy the herders' ability to make their own way in the world? In the beginning, Redento encouraged pastoralism. But it was discovered that, when they got water, people wanted to stay. A lot of old people in the manyattas settled here; they stayed here while the others took the animals around.

However, the animals are not taken far. Cattle need water every second day; they must therefore graze only about ten miles from the nearest source. Sheep and goats can go for four days without water, so they can use pastures twenty miles from the watering point....Traditionally, the Rendille depended almost exclusively on camels, these animals being best adapted to the desert; but the increased availability of water has encouraged the keeping of more goats, sheep, and even cattle. Goats are particularly voracious browsers, eating young seedlings before they can grow into trees, and their hooves break up the soil, leaving it exposed to wind erosion. Cattle are particularly vulnerable to drought.

The area around Korr was soon overgrazed. Less rainfall trickled underground through root systems; more ran off the soil in the form of floods. Wind took away exposed topsoil and left sand behind. Before long, there was a circular desert around Korr within a radius of twenty miles—and all because of the wells.

Both resources from Better World Society, *Only One Earth*,
(New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc., 1987): 64-65.
Courtesy of BBC Books, London.

activity four: hunger and natural environment

RESOURCE CARD (4 OF 4)

In Burkina Faso, the challenge of desertification...is never far from anyone's mind....

Throughout the country, reforestation is the order of the day. Twenty-six new tree-planting groups have sprung up in Sissili, a province some 200 kilometers from the capital. To maximize their efforts, these groups are joining together in a union that will also manage 100,000 hectares of existing woodlands. Each January through March members work as loggers, aided by forest rangers who determine which trees can be cut down.

"I am, above all, a farmer," says Yawaya Ouedrago, from Nagrego. But, he adds, "I became a logger so I could help convince people here that we have to reverse the damage to our way of life."

Deforestation hastens erosion, creating an annual loss of topsoil of 40 tonnes per hectare. This has contributed to a mass exodus of farmers and herders from the north in search of water and fertile fields, which in turn has put further pressure on productive land in the west and southwest, creating similar conditions....

The massive land reclamation programme is touching tens of thousands of Burkinabe, who in 1991-92 alone produced 2.8 million seedlings in village nurseries. The government has distributed more than 2 million plants for reforestation projects carried out mainly by women, children and the elderly.

Jean-Marie Sawadogo, "Burkina Mobilizes to Reclaim Land,"
African Farmer No. 10 (January 1994): 28-30.

activity four: hunger and natural environment

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Name: _____

What are some of the environmental conditions in Africa that may affect food security?

Activity Five

HOW DO POPULATION GROWTH AND HUNGER RELATE?

- Activity 5 explores the relationship of population growth and density to hunger.



The overall population of Africa would not appear to be a cause for concern in terms of the relationship between population and hunger. There are fewer people in all of Africa than there are in either China or India. With the exception of Nigeria, which has nearly 100 million people, no country in sub-Saharan Africa would be listed among the most populous nations. The ratio of people to land in Africa is also much less than in Asia or Latin America, yet there remains a vigorous debate about the relationship between population and hunger in Africa.

There are two primary reasons for this debate. The first is that Africa has the fastest rate of population increase of any continent in the world. This rate of increase places enormous stress on the continent's social services (health, education). It also means that a typical family has more people to feed and fewer workers than in other continents.

The second reason is that while there is plenty of land per person in much of Africa, the quality of the land is generally less fertile than is necessary for intensive food production. Most of Africa has relatively fragile soils, and many regions of the continent are either desert or semi-arid. This limits the amount of land available for agriculture.

Putting population on the political agenda in Africa has proven difficult, as the diverse viewpoints about the impact of population densities and population growth rates often produces more heat than light. It is seen as "blaming the victim" by Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans. The contentious debates at the September 1994 International Conference on Population and Development illustrate the highly divisive issues surrounding the discussion. In Africa, there is a slowly emerging consensus that despite the relatively less crowded population of the continent, it is not possible to sustain present growth rates. The difficulty is that there are few, if any, successful models for countries to adopt in order to limit population growth.

Outline of Activity

Students examine statistics on population growth and availability of food. They review two brief analyses of the prospects for food security in Africa in the coming years. They read brief quotes that illustrate some attitudes about family size and women. They then address several questions that explore the relationship between population growth and hunger and the controversial nature of this topic. As a group, they create a model or schematic drawing that illustrates the relationship between population growth and hunger.

activity five: hunger and population

Extension Questions

- What are some reasons that poor farmers may have large families?
- What are some reasons that might be given for encouraging women to have fewer children?
- How do personal decisions about family planning affect others outside the family?
- How should governments be involved in family planning?

Related Issues

- International Conference on Population and Development
- Education for women
- Migration
- International Conference on the Status of Women

Reference Materials

World Resource Institute. *World Resources, 1994-95*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Worldwatch Institute. *State of the World, 1995*. New York: Norton Press, 1995.

activity five: hunger and population

ACTIVITY CARD

As a group, read the Resource Cards and discuss the questions below:

1. Why is the topic of population growth and the issues surrounding it controversial?
2. How are population growth and hunger related?
3. What are some of the reasons why some people in Africa continue to have large families?
4. How can the nutritional needs of a growing population like that in Africa best be met?
5. Do you agree with the author who says that some people in Africa may be trapped in an endless cycle of hunger? Explain. What other ideas might be expressed about this?

GROUP TASK

As a group, create a model or schematic drawing that shows how population growth and hunger may be related. Be prepared to explain your model to your classmates.

activity five: hunger and population

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 4)

There is little reason to doubt that most of the projected increase in demand for food during the next 30 years will be met....But although global agricultural production has generally kept ahead of population growth in recent decades, there is little doubt that rapid demographic growth has been a major impediment to improvements in levels of food production and consumption. Nowhere is this clearer than in sub-Saharan Africa—a region which faces especially severe problems in terms of agricultural production and food consumption. Yields have improved little, and there appears to be an increasing dependence upon food aid.

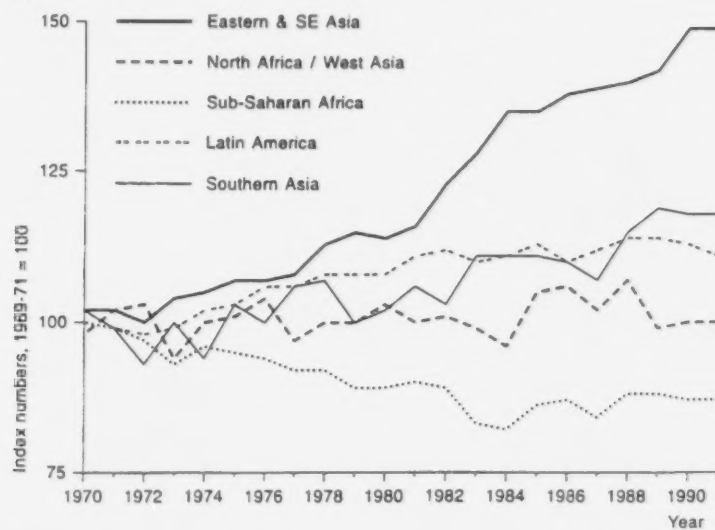


FIGURE 3. FAO food production indices, 1970-91, developing world regions

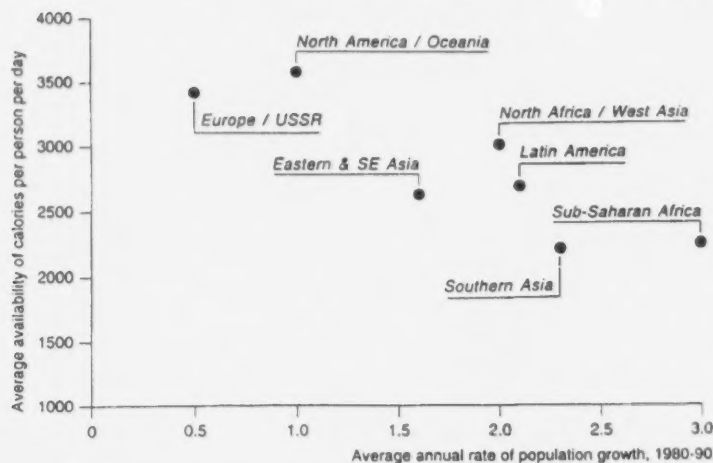


FIGURE 2. Average calorie availability per person in 1988-90 plotted against 1980-90 population growth rate, world regions

Excerpt and graphs from Tim Dyson, "World Population Growth and Food Supplies," *International Social Science Journal* 141 (September 1994): 366-367.

activity five: hunger and population

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 4)

A local population is demographically trapped if it has exceeded, or is projected to exceed the combination of

- (a) the carrying capacity of its own ecosystem,
- (b) its ability to obtain the products, and particularly the food, produced by other ecosystems except as food aid, and
- (c) its ability to migrate to other ecosystems in a manner which preserves (or improves) its standard of living (voluntary migration)

Items (b) and (c) describe the links that a population has with other ecosystems, and are crucial, so they are most easily thought of as "connectedness", and its opposite "disconnectness." A severely trapped population faces the five options of entrapment in varying combination. Depending on the local cultural, political and ecological factors it can:

- (1) Become progressively stunted, and/or starve.
- (2) Die from disease.
- (3) Slaughter itself or its neighbours.
- (4) Migrate in misery to a refugee camp or urban slum (involuntary migration).
- (5) Be supported indefinitely by food aid (if food is available).

Since endangered populations are growing rapidly, the critical part of the definition is "...is projected to..." and concerns the ultimate size of a population at the end of its demographic transition, in relation to its carrying capacity and its connectness. The major constrain is time, and particularly whether such measures as female education, etc. have time to bring the birth rate down before carrying capacity and connectedness are exceeded.

Maurice King et al, "Demographic Entrapment and Its Policy Implications-A One-Child World."
Paper presented in December 1994.

activity five: hunger and population

RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 4)

"The best way to keep a woman is barefoot in the winter and pregnant in the summer."

-African Proverb

Baobab No. 9, 1992.

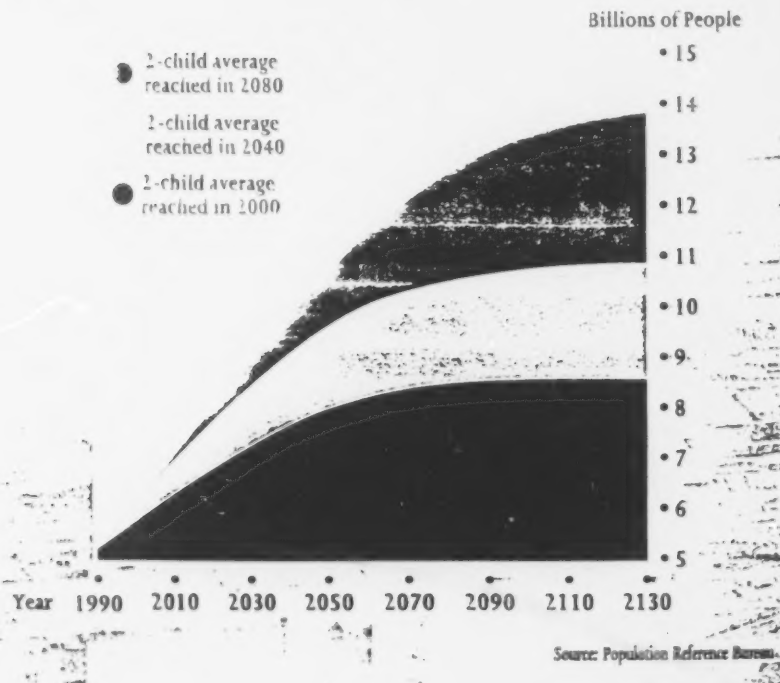
"In Kenya population doubles every 18 years. People have children for fairly good reasons. Children are an economic advantage from the age of seven onwards—they earn more than they consume. High infant mortality means you have to have lots of children so that at least some will reach adulthood."

Geoffrey Lean, *The Observer*.

activity five: hunger and population

RESOURCE CARD (4 OF 4)

WORLD POPULATION PROJECTIONS Impact of Varying Fertility Assumptions on Population Growth 1990-2130



Population Action International, *Challenging the Planet: Connections Between Population and the Environment*, (Washington, DC: Population Action International, 1993), 16.

Based on 1993 Population Reference Bureau projections.
Reprinted with permission of Population Action International.

activity five: hunger and population

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Name: _____

If the population in many African countries continues to grow, how can food security be created for all of Africa's people?

Activity Six

HOW DO FOREIGN AID AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT POLICIES AFFECT HUNGER?

- Activity 6 examines forms of foreign intervention such as food and technical aid and structural adjustment mechanisms encouraged by agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.



African countries have been recipients of foreign aid since their independence from European colonial rule. Foreign aid programs have involved the giving or loaning of funds to governments for programs to build up such areas as agriculture, health, and education. An increasingly visible component of aid has been the provision of thousands of tons of food to meet regular dietary needs, as well as emergency needs.

Aid programs have been both criticized and defended for 30 years, with food aid often receiving the most vocal debate. Programs are criticized for:

- sending inappropriate foods that cannot be grown in local environments or that require too much of the economic resources of small farmers;
- food resources being taken by more affluent farmers or by political officials;
- food being siphoned off by corrupt and incompetent governments which were rewarded for Cold War alliances, rather than quality of development programs.

Food aid defenders note that with a declining amount of food production per person, the provision of food resources is a necessary short-term solution, until the economies of Africa are back into a growth mode.

African countries began to experience serious food deficits in the 1970s, which led to growing imports of food after 1975. At the same time, the impact of the oil price increases and global recession led to growing debt and financial crises for many governments by the early 1980s. African governments turned to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for short-term loans to help them balance their budgets and pay their debts.

In order to receive loans, African governments were required to make major changes that were labeled "structural adjustment." Structural adjustment programs included reducing government spending, devaluing national currencies, opening up economies to foreign imports and laying off thousands of government employees.

Most governments found themselves under intense criticism from farmers who believed that their supplies (fertilizers, pesticides) and markets were being cut off, and from urban consumers who saw the price of food go up rapidly.

activity six: hunger and foreign aid

After 15 years of adjustment programs, there is still no consensus either on the overall benefits versus costs, or on the long-term impact on food security. What is clear is that African countries have not made up ground in food production over the past decade.

Outline of Activity

Students read two short articles evaluating the effectiveness of structural adjustment and foreign aid programs. They then define the terms *structural adjustment* and *foreign aid* in their own words. They examine the organizations and ideas behind these concepts and think about the effectiveness of these policies. As a group, they create a set of criteria for evaluating whether or not an aid program is effective.

Extension Questions

- What use could be made of food aid that might encourage local food production?
- How could governments provide social services while cutting expenses?
- What is meant by economic growth, economic development?
- How fair have adjustment policies been?

Related Issues

- Debt
- Budget deficits
- World Bank
- International Monetary Fund
- Food surplus

Reference Materials

Bread for the World Institute. *Hunger 1994: Transforming the Politics of Hunger*. Silver Spring, Md.: Bread for the World Institute, 1993.

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activity six: hunger and foreign aid

ACTIVITY CARD

foreign aid: help provided to a country other than your own, usually in the form of loans, food aid, or technical assistance

structural adjustment programs: economic policy changes, often a precondition set for an indebted country insisted upon by its lenders as a condition for future loans, intended to stimulate economic growth

As a group, examine the Resource Cards and discuss the questions below:

1. How would you describe *structural adjustment programs* and *foreign aid* in your own words by using familiar experiences as examples?
2. What is the intent of structural adjustment programs? foreign aid? Who develops and carries out these policies?
3. What are some of the ways that "help" might sometimes be harmful?
4. What are some of the reasons why a local farmer might not want a project that brings in outside ideas and money?
5. Why is it difficult to evaluate whether or not certain policies work?
6. What ideas and actions are most likely to solve immediate problems? What ideas and actions are most likely to create long-term change?

GROUP TASK

As a group, imagine you are a group of farmers from Niger. Develop a list of criteria or questions you would ask at the end of a foreign aid project in your community to determine whether or not it would be successful. Think about a project in your own community where a large outside organization has come in with ideas or money to help local people. Use the questions you have developed to evaluate the effectiveness of this local program. Be prepared to share your questions with the class.

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activity six: hunger and foreign aid

RESOURCE CARD (1 OF 3)

"What good is it producing more if the state isn't able to buy the surplus from us?" asks Moussa Alassane, a farmer from the Maradi region of eastern Niger. Last year he produced seven tons of millet and sorghum, three more than his family's annual needs. But with the government's withdrawal from grain marketing, dictated by the structural adjustment program negotiated with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, he had no option but to sell his surplus to "greedy merchants, and at a really pitiful price."

Other farmers are similarly angry. "If the World Bank really demanded that the government liberalize cereal marketing, abandoning us to the whims and greed of the merchants," says Halilou Issa, from the Tahoua region, "then I think it's a very bad policy."

"Tell the World Bank that we don't want this policy," insists Idrissa Ali, another farmer.

Souleymane Anza, "Niger's Farmers Attack Adjustment Policies," *African Farmer* No. 11 (April 1994): 34.

activity six: hunger and foreign aid

RESOURCE CARD (2 OF 3)

Question (Ernest Harsch):

Quite a number of NGOs and U.N. agencies like UNICEF have been reporting increases in poverty in Africa. They believe that certain aspects of adjustment, such as cutbacks in social spending, have exacerbated the problem. Are they mistaken, or is there something to their criticism?

Answer (Edward Jaycox, Vice President for Africa, World Bank):

I think they're mistaken. Of course, the situation is not rosy. It's true that poverty has deepened. In the countries that have pursued adjustment, this is not so. But on average in Africa, more countries are not in adjustment than are in adjustment. And in fact they have gotten much worse off....

It's the small farmer we're primarily interested in. It's very important that we get as many winners from structural adjustment as possible, and then we get more winners as time goes on and the economy actually starts to grow again. Most of these economies never got into structural adjustment before they went into freefall, which meant that exports had dried up, the currency was worthless, imports were being subsidized by an overvalued official exchange rate, the local currency wouldn't buy a dollar's worth of goods....

We know that we're dealing with governments that have definite blind spots and biases. They've got inadequacies that we cannot substitute for, except in the very long run. When a government is interested in alleviating poverty, we're much more effective. Now how many African governments put a top priority on alleviating poverty? I can't even think of three. When has the military given up its toys?...When has the role of women been enhanced without outside interference?

Ernest Harsch interview with Edward Jaycox, *African Farmer* No. 12 (July 1994): 17.

activity six: hunger and foreign aid

RESOURCE CARD (3 OF 3)

1. SELF JUSTIFICATION
Project director:



WITHOUT US, THESE PEASANTS ARE DONE FOR. THEY HAD NOTHING WHEN WE ARRIVED. TODAY, THANK GOD, THEY HAVE SOME SORT OF ORGANISATION. I'LL GET A CONTRACT FOR 2 MORE YEARS.

4. UNEASE
Village chief:



I HOPE THE PROJECT WILL FINISH THIS YEAR. THEN WE WON'T HAVE TO SEE THIS USELESS TEAM AROUND HERE ANY MORE.

THEY'RE ALWAYS ASKING FOR THINGS, AND NOTHING THEY DO IS ANY GOOD TO US.

WE'RE TOO POLITE BY HALF!

2. CONSPIRACY
Donor:



I KNOW THAT THE PROJECT DIRECTOR IS MAKING IT UP. HIS PROJECT HAS NOTHING LIKE THE IMPACT HE SAYS IT HAS.

BUT I HAVE TO SPEND MY BUDGET, AND HIS PROJECT IS THE ONLY ONE EXPENSIVE ENOUGH TO USE IT UP. I'LL GET A CONTRACT FOR 2 MORE YEARS.

5. SELF-SATISFACTION
Expert:



THIS PROJECT WOULD HAVE HAD NO CHANCE WITHOUT MY ADVICE. IT'S BECAUSE OF ME THAT THEY HAVE MANAGED TO GET SOMEWHERE, AND THE EVALUATION WILL SHOW UP MY CONTRIBUTION.

I'LL GET A CONTRACT FOR 2 MORE YEARS.

3. RHETORIC
Project meeting:



WE'VE EMPOWERED THEM. WE'VE SUPPORTED THEM.

- IN ORGANISATION
- AND CREDIT
- AND ADVICE
- AND PARTICIPATION

WE'VE GIVEN THEM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND WE'VE DONE IT ALL IN ONLY 4 YEARS

6 - THE TRUTH



HERE LIE

9 VILLAGES

VICTIMS OF:

- SUPPORT
- ORGANISATION
- CREDIT
- PARTICIPATION
- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ALL DEAD WITHIN 4 YEARS

IT ONLY TOOK 4 YEARS

"We Develop...And Move On," Baobab 10 (1993): 8-9.
Courtesy of Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN).

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activity six: hunger and foreign aid

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Name: _____

If people in your community were hungry, what actions (if any) would you like outside people and organizations to take to help improve the situation?

Closing Activity

The Web of Hunger



There are many different explanations regarding the causes of hunger in Africa. Each of these perspectives has weaknesses that makes it difficult to accept as the complete explanation for hunger in Africa. An alternative is to create a synthesis of these approaches that might argue the following: African countries inherited colonial economies that were geared to export a few commodities that were highly dependent upon unstable prices. Many African governments followed development and financial programs that undermined local food production and increased dependency upon imported foods, while not increasing domestic industrial production. Foreign aid programs and national development strategies generally were insensitive until recent years to the particular problems of food and agricultural production given the environmental constraints in many parts of the continent. Population growth rates contribute to the pressures on the environment, but they do not explain why hunger has persisted in both heavily populated and sparsely populated regions. What needs to be explored is how these different perspectives can inform each other and provide for a richer analysis of the causes and possible solutions of persistent forms of hunger.

Acknowledging that contending perspectives exist does not mean giving every factor equal weight. What can be seen in Africa, however, is the importance of understanding how different causes are of varying importance in different countries. This awareness enables the observer to make judgments based upon reflection and analysis rather than upon a preconceived answer. Thus, hunger in the Sudan can be linked with the country's civil war, while hunger in Kenya is more connected with the inequities in the country's economic and social relations, or with environmental constraints. Hunger in parts of the Sahel is due to environmental conditions and the lack of appropriate development models, whereas hunger in Zaire is far more connected to the corruption of the country's leadership and the disintegration of its political viability.

Overview

In this activity, students revisit the interactive bulletin board they developed showing the causes of hunger. They use this as a starting point for creating a "web of hunger." Student groups complete the murals "The Face of Hunger" that they began in the Orientation Activity: Part II and individual students develop essays capturing their ideas on how to provide food security for all people.

Time One class period

Materials

- Colored marking pens
- Construction paper - all colors
- Yarn

closing activity

Suggested Procedure

1. Begin this session by asking students to spend three quiet, reflective minutes looking over the information that has been collected on the interactive bulletin board. Ask them to think about new information or new connections that they have made as a result of studying hunger in Africa.
2. Provide students with colored marking pens, additional paper (colored and white), and yarn. Ask them to work in pairs and identify and create something that could be added to the bulletin board to help turn it into an interactive web that shows the many interrelationships among the causes of hunger. Allow the students 15 minutes for this activity. Debrief this by asking some students to explain what they added or connected to the display.
3. Redistribute the mural "The Face of Hunger" that the students began in the Orientation Activity. Ask them to think about additional images that would make their murals more complete. Encourage them to think about connections and interrelationships among the various conditions that contribute to lack of food and hunger. Encourage them to bring in images that portray hunger as a problem throughout the world, not just in Africa. Allow the students time to complete their murals. You may want to debrief this activity by having each group explain the symbolism behind the images they have created.
4. As a final activity, ask each student to write a letter to the President of the World Bank, the mayor of their town, or the president or executive director of an NGO (nongovernmental organization). Ask the students to tell him/her their ideas about how food security can be provided for all. Encourage them to draw on their own experiences and to give local examples of things that work.

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